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1886

WEMYSS' ACTING DRAMA.

UNDER THE GASLIGHT:

A TOTALLY ORIGINAL AND PICTURESQUE

Drama

OF

LIFE AND LOVE IN THESE TIMES,

IN FIVE ACTS.

By AUGUSTIN DALY,

AUTHOR OF "LEAH THE FORSAKEN," "GRIFFITH GAUNT," "TAMING A BUTTERFLY," ETC., ETC.

AS ORIGINALLY PLAYED AT THE NEW YORK THEATER IN THE MONTHS OF AUGUST, SEPT. AND OCT., 1867.

AUTHOR'S EDITION

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UNDER THE GASLIGHT.

CAST OF CHARACTERS, AS PLAYED AT THE NEW YORK THEATER.

Produced August 12, 1867.

Ray Trafford [one of the New York "bloods"] .Mr. A. H. Davenport.
Snorkey [a returned Veteran, established as a Soldier Messenger, but open to anything else].....Mr. J. K. Mortimer.
Byke [one of the men whom the law is always reaching for and never touches].....Mr. J. B. Studley.
Ed. Demill [one of the rising Wall street generation] .....Mr. Newton.
Windel [his friend, "sound on the street"].....Mr. Reed.
Justice Bowling, [of the Tombs police Court].....Mr. Welsh Edwards.
Counsellor Splinter [an Attorney of the Tombs Court]...Mr. Jas. Dunn.
Bermudas [one of the under crust, a sidewalk merchant Prince, with a "banjo swarry"].....Mr. C. T. Parsloe.
Peanuts [a rival operator in papers and matches].....Master Shea.
Lillywhite [another " " "].....Master Shay.
Sam [a colored citizen, ready for suffrage when it is ready for *him*] Mr. Williams.
Rafferdi (nee Rafferty), [an Italian Organist from Cork]....Mr. Sullivan.
The Sergeant of the River Patrol.... . Mr. Hurley.
Policeman 999 .....Mr. Sampson.
Martin .....Mr. Fielding.
Peter Rich [the Boy who was committed].....Master Willie
The Signal Man at Shrewsbury Bend .....Mr. H. Ryner.
Members of the Tuesday Sociable, Court Officers, Dock Boys, &c.
Laura Cortland [the Belle of Society] .....Miss Rose Eytinge.
Pearl Cortland, [pretty, but no heart].....Miss Blanche Grey.
Peachblossom, [a girl who was never "brought up," with the doleful ditty of "the Knight, the dame, and the Murderous Rival."] Mrs. Skerrett.
Old Judas [the right hand of Byke].....Mrs. Wright.
Mrs. Van Dam [one of the voices of Society] .....Miss Lizzie Davey.
Sue Earlie [one of the echos of the voice].....Miss Mahon.
Lizzie Liston [another echo].....Miss Macy.

Reproduced December 4, 1867.

Ray Trafford [one of the New York "Bloods,"].....Mr. G. H. Clarke.
Snorkey [a returned Veteran, established as a Soldier Messenger, but open to anything else].....Mr. J. K. Mortimer.
Byke [one of the men whom the law is always reaching for and never touches].....Mr. Welsh Edwards.
Ed. Demill [one of the rising Wall street generation].....Mr. Neal.
Windel [his friend, "sound on the street,"].....Mr. Reed
Justice Bowling [of the Tombs Police Court].....Mr. W. H. Collins.
Counsellor Splinter [an Attorney of the Tombs Court]..... Mr. T. L. Donnelly.
Bermudas [one of the under crust, a sidewalk merchant Prince, with a "banjo swarry,"] .....Mr. C. T. Parsloe.
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The Signal Man at Shrewsbury Bend.....Mr. H. C. Ryner.
Members of the Tuesday Sociable, Court Officers, Dock Boys, &c.
Laura Cortland [the Belle of Society].....Miss Irene Worrell.
Pearl Cortland [pretty, but no heart] .....Miss Sophie Worrell.
Peachblossom [a girl who was never "brought up," with the doleful ditty of "the Knight, the Dame, and the Murderous Rival,"] Miss Jennie Worrell.
Old Judas [the right hand of Byke].....Mrs. Wright
Mrs. Van Dam [one of the voices of Society] .....Miss Logan.
Sue Earlie [one of the echos of the voice].....Miss Wakeman.
Lizzie Liston [another echo].....Miss Macy.

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1886

UNDER THE GASLIGHT.

ACT I.

SCENE 1st.—*Parlor at the Courtlands; deep window at back showing snowy exterior; street lamp lighted; time, night; the place elegantly furnished; chandelier.*

RAY TRAFFORD *is discovered lounging on tete-a-tete* (C.) PEARL *is at* (L.) *door taking leave of* DEMILT, WINDEL, MRS. VAN DAM, *and* SUE EARLIE, *who are all dressed and muffled to go out.*

Mrs. V. Good night! of course we'll see you on Tuesday

Pearl. To be sure you will.

Demilt. Never spent a jollier hour. Good night, Ray.

Ray. (*On sofa.*) Good night.

Mrs V. You won't forget the Sociable on Tuesday, Ray?

Ray. O, I won't forget.

All. (*At door.*) Good night—good night! [*Exit.* L.

Pearl. Good night. (*Coming forward.*) O, dear! now they're gone, and the holiday's gone with them. (*Goes to window.*) There they go. (*Laughter without.*) RAY, do come and look at the VAN DAM'S new sleigh. How they have come out.

Ray. Yes, it's the gayest thing in the Park!

Pearl. (*Still at window* C.) I wonder where they got the money. I thought you said VAN DAM had failed!

Ray. Well, yes. He failed to pay, but he continues to spend.

Pearl. (*As if to those outside*). Good night! (*Response from without as sleigh bells jingle*—"*Good night.*") I wish I was in there with you. It's delightful for a sleigh ride, if it wasn't New Year's. O! there's DEMILT over! (*Laughter outside—cracking of whips—* RAY *saunters up to window. Sleigh bells jingle, sleigh music heard to die away.* RAY *and* PEARL *wave their handkerchiefs.* RAY *comes down and sits.* C.)

Pearl. (*Closing lace curtains.*) Isn't it a frightful thing to be shut up here on such a beautiful night, and New Year's of all others. Pshaw? we've had nothing but mopes all day. O, dear! I hate mourning, though it does become me, and I hate everything but fun, larks and dancing. (*Comes down*).

Ray. Where in the world is Laura?

Pearl. O! do forget her for a second, can't you? She'll be here presently. You're not in the house a minute but it's, "Where's LAURA?" "Why don't LAURA come?"

Ray (*Taking her hand.*) Well, if anybody in the world could

make me forget her, it would be you. But if you had a lover, wouldn't you like him to be as constant as that?

Pearl. That's quite another thing.

Ray. But this doesn't answer my question—Where is she?

Pearl. I sent for her as soon as I saw you coming. She has hardly been down here a moment all this evening. O, dear! Now don't you think I'm a victim, to be cooped up in this way instead of receiving calls as we used to?

Ray. You forget that your mother died only last summer. (*Rising.*)

Pearl. No, I don't forget. Pshaw! You're just like LAURA. She's only my cousin, and yet she keeps always saying—"Poor aunt Mary! let us not forget how she would have sorrowed for us."

Ray. (*Going towards back*). Well, don't you know she would, too?

Pearl. I don't know anything about it. I was always at boarding school, and she only saw me once a year. LAURA was always at home, and it's very different. But don't let's talk about it. To die—ugh! I don't want to die till I don't want to live—and that'll not be for a million of years. Come, tell me—where have you been to-day? how many calls did you make? (*Sitting in tete-a-tete*).

Ray. About sixty.

Pearl. That all? You're lazy. DEMILT and WINDEL made a hundred and thirty, and they say that's nothing. Won't you have a cup of coffee?

Ray. No.

Pearl. Ain't you hungry?

Ray. No—you torment.

Pearl. O, dear! I suppose it's because you're going to be married shortly to LAURA. If there's one time that a man's stupid to his friends, it's when he's going to be married shortly. Tell me whom you saw. (RAY *has sauntered off* (L.), *and is looking over cards on table.*) Where are you? Oh, you needn't be so impatient to see her. Do be agreeable; sit here and tell me something funny, or I shall drop down and fall asleep.

Ray. (*Over her shoulder*). You witch! Why didn't I fall in love with you?

Pearl. (*Laughing.*) I don't know; why didn't you?

Ray. You never keep me waiting. (*Listening off* R.) Ah, that's her step! No.

Pearl. Do sit down.

Ray. (*Sitting*). This calling's a great bore; but as you and LAURA insisted I should go through it, I did. First I—(*Jumping up.*) I knew it was she. (*Goes to door*, R. H.: *meets* LAURA, *who enters.*) How you did keep me waiting. (*Kisses both her hands.*)

Laura. And you, sir, we have been looking for you since eight o'clock.

Ray. O, I was fulfilling your orders. I've been engaged in the business of calling, from ten o'clock in the morning, till now—(*looks at watch*—) ten at night.

Laura. Well, you can make this your last one, for you have leave to spend a nice long hour chatting here before you go. Won't you have some supper. (*Goes to bell*). L. 2 E. *on table.*

Ray. I don't care if I do I'm rather famished.

Pearl. Well, I declare! Did LAURA bring your appetite with her? LAURA *rings.*

Ray. I don't know how it is, but she brings me a relish for everything in life, I believe. LAURA, I think if I were to lose you I'd mope to death and starve to death.

Laura. Well, that's as much as to say I'm a sort of Life Pill (MARTIN *enters door* L. H.) Supper. (MARTIN *exits.*)

Ray. You may joke about it,—but it's so. You take the lounge (LAURA *and* PEARL *sit on tete-a-tete.*)

Pearl. You don't want me to go away, do you? (*Putting her head on* LAURA'S *shoulder.*)

Laura. Certainly not. What an idea!

Pearl. I'm sure you'll have time enough to be alone when you are married. And I do so want to talk and be talked to.

Laura. Well, Ray shall talk to you.

Pearl. He was just going to tell me about his calls to-day.

Laura. That's exactly what we want to hear about. Did you call on every one we told you to?

Ray. Every one. There was Miss ———

Pearl. Did you go to HENRIETTA LISTON'S first?

Ray. Yes, and wasn't she dressed! Speaking of dress, are you going to have your new pink for the Sociable, Tuesday?

Laura. Yes, PEARL, and I will do credit to the occasion, as it is our first for a year.

Ray. (*Taking* LAURA'S *hand.*) And *our* last.

Pearl. Our last!

Ray. LAURA'S and mine. For when we are married, you know, we shall be tabooed—where maids and bachelors only are permitted.

Pearl. O bless me! (*rising.*) How do you do Mrs. TRAFFORD.

Laura. (*rising*) (*sadly.*) I wish you hadn't said that PEARL. You know the old proverb: "Call a maid by a married name."

Ray. Nonsense! (*Putting his arm about* LAURA'S *waist.*) It's only a few days to wait, and we'll live long enough, you know. For nothing but death shall separate us.

[MARTIN *appears at door* L.

Pearl. O, here's supper.

Martin Beg pardon, Miss.

Laura. What's the matter?

Martin. There's a person below, Miss, who says he's been sent with a bouquet for you, Miss, and must deliver it in person.

Laura. For me? Whose servant is it?

Martin. I don't know, Miss, he looks like one of those soldier Messengers—red cap and all that.

Laura. Show him up here.

[*Exit* MARTIN, D 2 E. L.

Pearl. How romantic. So late at night. It's a rival in disguise, RAY.

(MARTIN *re-enters showing in* SNORKEY, *with an air of disdain,* SNOR. *has a large bouquet in his hand, and his hat is under the stump of his right arm, which is cut off.*

Laura. You wished to see me?

Snorkey. (L. H.) Are you Miss LAURA COURTLAND?

Laura. Yes.

Snorkey. Then I was told to give you this.

Laura. (*Taking it from* RAY, *who has crossed* L. *and received it from* SNORKEY.) By whom?

Snorkey. Now, that's what I don't know myself! You see I was down by the steps of the Fifth Avenue Hotel, taking a light supper off a small toothpick, when a big chap dressed in black came by, and says he: "Hallo, come with me if you want to earn a quarter." That (*confidentially to all*) being my very frame of mind, I went up one street and down another, till we came here. "Just you take this up there," says he, "and ask for Miss LAURA COURTLAND, and give it to her and no one else."

Laura. It is some folly of our late visitors

Snorkey. I'm one of the Soldier Messengers, Miss. We take to it very well, considering we had so little running in Uncle Sam's service.

Ray. (*As* SNOR. *is going* L.) Stop a moment, my man. Were you not one of the Twenty-second's recruits?

Snorkey. Yes, Captain; I remember you joined us in New York, and left us at Washington. Real fighting wasn't funny, you thought, and I began to think so too at Fredericksburg.

Ray. Poor devil.

Snorkey. There was a South Carolina gentleman took such a fancy to me at Fredericksburg! Wouldn't have no denial,—cut off my arm to remember me by; he was very fond of me. I wasn't any use to Uncle Sam then, so I came home, put a red band round my blue cap, and with my empty sleeve, as a character from my last place, set up for light porter and general messenger. All orders executed with neatness and dispatch.

Pearl. And Uncle Sam has forgotten you.

Snorkey. Ah! Miss, don't blame Uncle Sam for that, he's got such a big family to look after, I can't find fault if he don't happen to remember all us poor stumps of fellows.

Ray. (L. H.) So it seems.

Laura. (C.) (PEARL *takes bouquet.*) Poor fellow! (*To servant.*) MARTIN, be sure and give him a glass of wine before he goes.

Snorkey. (L. C.) I'm much obliged, Miss—but I don't think it would be good for me on an empty stomach—after fasting all day.

Laura. Well, MARTIN shall find you some supper, too.

Snorkey. Is this MARTIN? What a nice young man. Mayn't he have a drop of something, too? He must have caught cold letting me in, he has got such a dreadful stiffness in the back of his neck. [MARTIN *exit.*

Ray. (*Giving penciled address.*) Call on me at this place tomorrow, and you shan't regret it.

Snorkey All right, Cap'n! I havn't forgot the Army Regulations about punctuality and promotion. Ladies, if ever either of you should want a Light Porter, think of JOE SNORKEY—wages no objection. [*Exit* L. H. *door.*

Pearl (C.) (*Who has been examining the bouquet.*) O! Laura, only look—here's a billet-doux!

Ray. Nonsense! Crazy head! Who would dare (*takes bouquet*) —a letter! (*Takes a paper from bouquet.*)

Laura. A letter?

Pearl. I am crazy—am I?

Ray. (*Reads superscription.*) "For Miss LAURA COURTLAND. Confidential."

Laura. (*Laughs.*) Ha! Ha! from some goose who has made one call too many to-day. Read it, RAY—(*Offering letter.*)

Ray. "Dear LAURA ——— (*Refusing the letter, and going to* PEARL.)

Laura. (*Looks at it a moment, when the whole expression of face changes. Then reads slowly and deliberately.* RAY *down* R. C. *with* PEARL.) "*I respectfully beg you to grant me the favor of an interview to-night. I have waited until your company retired. I am waiting across the street, now.*"

Pearl. (*Runs to window.*) A tall man in black is just walking away.

Laura. "*If you will have the door opened as soon as you get this, I will step over; if you don't, I will ring; under all circumstances I will get in. There is no need to sign my name; you will remember me as the strange man whom you once saw talking with your mother in the parlor, and who frightened you so much.*" What can be the meaning of this?—PEARL—no—(*goes to bell on table* L. H., *and rings*)

Ray. LAURA, you—

Laura. Ask me nothing. I will tell you by-and-by.

[*Enter* MARTIN, L. *door.*

Martin. Missit———

Laura. Admit no one till you bring me the name.

Martin. I was about to tell you, Miss, that a strange man has forced himself in at the door and asks to see you, but will give no name.

Ray. Kick the rascal out! [*Cross to* L.

Pearl. Oh! don't let him come here.

Martin. He's a very strange-looking person, Miss.

Ray. I'll find out what this means! (*Is going to door* L. *when* BYKE *appears at it smiling and bowing.*)

Byke. (L. H.) I'll spare you the trouble, if you'll hear me a minute.

Ray. (L. C.) (*violently*) Who are you, fellow?

Byke. Don't, I beg you. Don't speak so crossly: I might answer back—then you'd kick me out—and you'd never forgive yourself for it as long as I lived.

Ray. Your business? Come! Speak quickly and begone.

Byke. (*Coming down* L.) Business! on this happy day! I came for pleasure—to see Miss COURTLAND, my little pupil ———grown so ——only think, sir! I knew her when she was only a little child I taught her music—she was so mu ical—and so beautiful———I adored her, and her mother told me I needn't come again—But I did—and her mother was glad to see me. Wasn't she, little pupil? —(*to* LAURA, *who is pale with terror, leaning on* PEARL. RAY C., BYKE L.)—and begged me to stay—but I said no—I'd call occasionally—to see my dear little pupil, and to receive any trifling contribution her mother might give me. Won't you shake hands, little pupil? (*Advances suddenly, when* RAY *grasps him by the collar*—BYKE *glares at him a moment. Then, quickly as before.*) Don't! please, don't! The stuff is old, and I've no other.

Ray. The fellow's drunk! Leave the house.

Byke. What! after sending that touching bouquet?

Laura. It was you, then? I knew it.

Byke. You see she knows me. Ah! memory how it blooms again where the plough of time has passed.

Laura Leave this house at once.

Byke. Not until I have spoken to you.

Ray. (*Seizing him.*) You miserable rascal.

Byke. Don't, pray don't! I weigh a hundred and ninety-eight pounds, and if you attempt to throw me about you'll strain yourself

Laura. (*Crossing*) Go. To-morrow in the morning I will see you.

Byke. Thanks! I thank you, Miss, for your forbearance. (*To* RAY.) I am also obliged to you, sir, for not throwing me out at the window. I am indeed. I wish you good night, and many happy returns of the day. (*Bows and turns to go. Then familiarly to servant.*) Many calls to-day, John? [*Exit* L.

Ray. (*Runs to* LAURA, *who is pale.*)

Laura. (*Pointing after* BYKE.) See that he goes.

[*Exit* RAY, L. *door*

Laura. (*Taking both of* PEARL'S *hands in her own.*) Pearl, he must know everything.

Pearl. O, dear! this is dreadful! I do hate scenes.

Laura. He must know everything, I tell you; and you must relate all. He will question—he will ponder—leave him nothing to ask.

Pearl. If you wish it, but—

Laura. I desire it; speak of me as you will—but tell him the truth. (RAY *enters hastily,* L.) Stay with her. Don't follow me.

[*Exit* R.

Ray. (*Down* R. H.) Pearl, what does this mean.

Pearl. O, it's only a little cloud that I want to clear up for you.

Ray. Cloud —how? where?

Pearl. Don't I tell you I am going to tell you. Sit down here by me. (*She sinks into tete-a-tete.* C.)

Ray. (*Promenading.*) He said he knew her. And she gave him an interview for to-morrow. That drunken wretch—

Pearl. Do sit down. I can never speak while you are walking about so. (*Gets up, brings him to a chair,* R. H. *and makes him sit.*) Sit by me, won't you? for I've got something strange to tell you.

Ray. *You* serious! I'd as soon expect to see the lightning tamed. Well, I listen.

Pearl. I have something to say to you, RAY, which you must settle with your own heart. You love LAURA, do you not?

Ray. PEARL, I do more, I adore her. I adore the very air that she breathes. I will never be happy without her. I can swear *that.*

Pearl. LAURA is twenty now. How do you think she looked when I first saw her?

Ray. Were you at home when she first came into this earthly sphere?

Pearl. Yes.

Ray. Well then, I suppose she looked very small and very pink.

Pearl. She was covered with rags, barefooted, unkempt, crying and six years old.

Ray. (*Shocked.*) Explain.

Pearl. One night father and mother were going to the Opera When they were crossing Broadway, the usual crowd of children accosted them for alms. As mother felt in her pocket for some change, her fingers touched a cold and trembling hand which had clutched her purse.

Ray. A pickpocket! Well.

Pearl. This hand my mother grasped in her own, and so tightly that a small, feeble voice uttered an exclamation of pain. Mother looked down, and there beside her was a little ragged girl.

Ray. The thief.

Pearl. Yes, but a thief hardly six years old, with a face like an angel's. "Stop!" said my mother. "What are you doing?" "Trying to steal," said the child. "Don't you know that it's wicked to do so?" asked my father "No," said the girl, "but it's dreadful to be hungry." "Who told you to steal?" asked my mother. "She—there!" said the child, pointing to a squalid woman in a doorway opposite, who fled suddenly down the street. "That is OLD JUDAS," said the girl.

Ray. OLD JUDAS. What a name! But how does this story interest us?

Pearl. This child was LAURA. My father was about to let her go unharmed—but my mother said "No, it is not enough. We have a duty to perform, even to her," and acting on a sudden impulse, took her to our home. On being questioned there, the child seemed to have no recollection, save of misery and blows. My mother persuaded father, and the girl was sent to a country clergyman's for instruction, and there she remained for several years.

Ray. PEARL, you are joking with me.

Pearl. In beauty, and accomplishments, and dignity, LAURA (as mother named her) exceeded every girl of her age. In gratitude she was all that father could have wished. She was introduced as you know, into society as my cousin, and no one dreams of her origin.

Ray. (*Starting up*). LAURA, an outcast—a thief!

Pearl. (*Rising*). No, that is what she might have been.

Ray. And this man—to-night.

Pearl. All I know about him is, that four years ago this man came with a cruel looking woman, to see mother. There was a fearful scene between them, for LAURA and I sat trembling on the stairs, and overheard some awful words. At last they went away, the man putting money into his pocket as he left.

Ray. But who were they?

Pearl. LAURA never told me, and mother would not. But, of course, they must have been LAURA'S father and mother. (RAY *sinks on chair as if overcome.*)

Pearl. Mother made me promise never to tell anybody this, and you would have known nothing had not LAURA made me speak. You see, she would not conceal anything from you. (*Going to him.*) RAY, why don't you speak—shall I go after LAURA? Shall I tell her to come to you? Why don't you answer? (*Going.*) I'll go and tell her you want to see her. (*Pausing as she goes* R.) I'm going to send her to you, RAY.

[*Goes off* R. *still looking back at him.*

Ray. (*Starting up.*) What a frightful story. LAURA COURTLAND a thief! A drunken wretch who knows her history, and a squalid beggar woman who can claim her at any moment as their child. And I was about to marry her. Yes, and I love her. But what would my mother think? My friends? Society? No—no—no—I cannot think of it. I will write her—I will tell her—pshaw! she knows of course that I cannot wed her now! (*Goes to the table* L. U.

E.) Here is paper. (*Sits.*) What am I about to do? What will be said of me? But I owe a duty to myself—to society—I must perform it. (*Writes.*) "LAURA, *I have heard of all from your sister.*" What have I said—(*crosses out last word*)—" from PEARL. *You know that I love you, but my mother will demand of me a wife who will not blush to own her kindred, and who is not the daughter of obscurity and crime.*" It is just; it is I who have been deceived. (*Folds letter and addresses it*). I will leave it for her. (*Puts on light overcoat, which hangs on chair at back.*) I must go before she returns. Her step—too late! (*Crams the letter into pocket of overcoat.* LAURA *enters* R. H.)

Laura. (*Gently*). RAY.

Ray. Miss—Miss COURTLAND. (LAURA *looks at him a moment, smiles and then crosses* C. *without further noticing him, and sits down on tete-a-tete.*) What have I said? What ought I to have said? (*He takes a step towards her—she rises, without looking at him goes to window—looks out, then looks over books on table* R. H.)

Ray. LAURA—I—

Laura. Pshaw, where is my book?

Ray. What book do you want, LAURA?

Laura. Sir.

Ray. (*Repulsed.*) Oh!—(*pause*)—I've been a fool. How lovely she looks. (*He follows her mechanically to table* L.) Can I find it for you?

[LAURA *picks up a book and reseats herself.*

Laura. Don't trouble yourself I beg.

Ray. (*Coming forward and leaning over her seat.*) LAURA.

Laura. (*Without lifting her head.*) Well.

Ray. (*Toying with her hair*). Look at me.

Laura. (*Turns round and looks full at him.*)

Ray. No, no, not that way; as you used to. You act as if I were a stranger.

Laura. They are only strangers who call me Miss COURTLAND. (*Resumes reading.*)

Ray. Forgive me, I beg you to forgive me. (*Coming round and sitting beside her.*) I was mad—it was so sudden—this miserable story—but I don't care what they say. O! do listen to me. I thought you hated reading.

Laura. I often wish that I were ugly, wretched and repulsive, like the heroine in this story. (*Seats herself.*)

Ray. (*Behind her.*) Why?

Laura. Because, then I could tell who really loved me.

Ray. And don't you know?

Laura. No; I do not.

Ray. Well, I know.

Laura. Do tell me then, please.

Ray. He has told you so himself a hundred times.

Laura. You.

Ray. I.

Laura. (*Laughing heartily at him, then seriously.*) How happy must those women be, who are poor, and friendless, and plain, when some true heart comes and says: I wish to marry you.

Ray. LAURA, you act very strangely to-night.

Laura. Will you put this book away?

Ray. (*Throws it on table.*) There LAURA. (*Seats himself beside her.*)

Laura. (*Rising.*) There's PEARL calling me.

Ray. (*Rising and taking her hand.*) LAURA, why don't you let me speak to you.

Laura. About what?

Ray. About my love.

Laura. For whom? Not me. This is only marriage and giving in marriage. I hate the very word.

Ray. You did not think so once.

Laura. I wish I had. I am frightened now; I begin to understand myself better.

Ray. And I am frightened because I understand you less.

Laura. Do not try to; good night. (*Up* R. C. *stops by door as she is going out,*) good night Mr. TRAFFORD.

[*Exit laughing,* R. 2 E.

Ray. I've been an ass. No, I wrong that noble animal. The ass recognized the angel, and I, like Balaam, was blind. But I see now. After all what have I to fear? (*Takes letter from pocket.*) No one knows of this, (*puts it in his pocket again.*) Let things go on; we'll be married, go straight to Europe, and live there ten years. That's the way we'll fix it.

(*Exit* L. 2 E. *Scene closes in.*

SCENE II. (*1st Grooves*)—*The Gentlemen's coat-room at* DELMONICO'S *opening* (C.) *for hat and coat. Chairs* (L. H.) *Pier-glass on flat.*

(*Enter* WINDEL *and* DEMILT *muffled, and with umbrellas* L. 2 E. *They proceed to disrobe.*)

Dem. Phew! wet as the deuce, and cold, too. There'll be nobody here.

Wind. It's an awful night. The rooms are almost empty.

Dem. SAM! Where the dickens is that darkey? (*Enter* SAM R. *fetching in a chair, and boot-black, box and brush*)

Sam. Here, sah.

Dem. (*Sitting in chair.*) Hurry up with my boots. Who's here?

Sam. Berry few gemman, sah; only lebben overcoats and ten overshoes. Bless de Lord—dem overshoes is spilin the polishin business.

Dem. Look out and don't give me any knocks.

Wind. (*Handing in his coat at window and getting check for it.*) I wonder if the COURTLAND girls have come yet.

Dem. What did LAURA COURTLAND ever see in TRAFFORD to fall in love with? The VAN DAM party is my fancy.

Wind. (*Brushing his hair at glass.*) She's ten years older than you, and has a husband.

Dem. Yes, a fine old banker, on whom she can draw for everything but attention and affection. She has to get that by her own business tact.

(*Other parties enter, exchange good-nights, and deposit their coats; some go out at once, some arrange themselves at glass.*)

Dem. That'll do, SAM, take my coat. (*Enter* RAY, L. 1 E.)

Wind. Hallo! TRAFFORD, this is a night, ain't it? Have the COURTLANDS come?

Ray. Not with me. Here, SAM, take my coat. (*His coat is pulled off by* SAM, *and four letters drop out.*) Stupid.

Dem. Save the pieces. Mind the love letters.

Ray. (*Picking them up.*) Look out well next time. There's that cursed letter I was going to send to LAURA. Confound it, I must destroy it when I go home. (*Puts letters back in overcoat pocket.*) (RAY *gets his boots touched up.*)

Dem. I say, TRAFFORD, what'll you take, and let a fellow read those? WINDEL, I guess if the girls could get into the cloak-room, it would be better than the dead-letter office. What a time they'd have! Are you ready?

Wind. What's the use of hurrying? There's no life in the party till LAURA COURTLAND comes. By Jove, TRAFFORD! you're in luck. She's the prettiest girl in New York.

Ray. And the best. (*March music heard.*)

Dem. There's the march music; let's go. (*Gets a final brush as they all go off* A 1 E)

Ray. Come along. [*Exunt.*

Sam. (*Picking up a letter dropped from* RAY'S *pocket.*) Dere's anoder of dem billy dooses; wonder if it am Mist' TRAFFORD'S. Eh, golly! musn't mix dem gentlemen's letters,—musn't mix 'em nohow,—or an oberruling providence wouldn't be able to stop fighting in dis city for de nex month

[*Exit, carrying a chair,* R. 1 E.

(*Scene draws off to dance music.*)

(*Wait till change of music before change of Sc.*)

SCENE III.—*The Blue Room at Delmonico's. Waltz-music as the Scene opens. Waltzers in motion.* PEARL *is dancing with Mrs.* VAN DAM.

(*Enter* TRAFFORD, DEMILT, *and* WINDEL, R. L. R.)

Pearl. There's RAY. I've had enough; I want to speak with him. (*Bursts away from Mrs.* VAN D., *runs up to* TRAFFORD. DE MILT *goes up to Mrs.* VAN D)

Pearl. (To RAY.) You lazy fellow, where have you been?

Dem. You're not tired, are you?

Mrs. V. D. I feel as fresh as a daisy.

Dem. Have a waltz with me. (*Waltz music, piano, as they dance,* WINDEL *goes to* SUE EARLIE.)

Ray. (*Coming down with* PEARL.) Where's LAURA?

Pearl. She wasn't ready, and I was dying to come. Been fixed since eight o'clock; so I came with SUE EARLIE. So you made it up with LAURA.

Ray. Yes. Don't say anything more about the horrid subject. We've made it all up. But what on earth keeps her to-night? It's eleven already. (*Looking at watch.*) Confound it, I tremble every moment she's out of my sight. I fear that terrible man and his secret.

Mrs. V. D. (*Coming up with* DEMILT.) TRAFFORD, you look very uneasy. What's the matter?

Ray. O, nothing. I think I ought to go for LAURA. I will, too. (*Servant passes at back.*) Here! go up stairs for my overcoat. (*Gives the man a card, and he goes out.*)

Mrs. V. D. Nonsense! She'll be here in good time. You shan't leave us. Hold him, PEARL. We want a nine-pin quadrille: we

haven't half enough gentlemen. Come, be jolly about it. You lovers are always afraid some one will carry your girls away.

Ray. (*Uneasy.*) I? I'm not afraid.

Pearl. Come, come! I never saw such a restless fellow.

(SERVANT *enters with coat*, C.)

SERVANT. Here's your coat, sir.

Mrs. Van D. Give it to me. I'm determined you shan't go. (*Takes coat carelessly.*) I'll make you a promise—if LAURA isn't here in fifteen minutes you shall have your coat, and may go for her.

Ray. Well, I suppose I'll have to wait.

Mrs Van D. There: take him off, PEARL. (RAY *goes up with* PEARL. *To* SERVANT.) Here take this back. *Flings coat to* SERVANT. *As she does so, letters drop from it.*) Well, there's a mess! (SUE EARLIE *and another lady run forward and pick up letters.*) Love letters, of course!—(*Smelling them.*) Perfumed to suffocation.

Sue Earlie. Here's one for LAURA. It's unsealed and not delivered.

Mrs. Van D. (*Tremolo waltz music.*) A fair prize! Let's see it. (*Music. Takes and opens it. Puts on eye-glasses and reads.*) "*Laura*"—Well, come! That's cool for a lover. "*I have heard all from*"———something scratched out—ah!—"*Your sister*, PEARL—*Your obscure origin—terrible family connexions—the secret of the tie which binds you to a drunken wretch—My mother, Society—will demand of me a wife who will not blush to own her kindred,—or stare at the name of outcast and thief!*

"Signed, RAY TRAFFORD."

(*All stand speechless and look at each other. All this time the rest have been dancing.*)

Sue Earlie. What can it mean?

Mrs. Van D. It means that the rumors of ten years ago are proven. It was then suspected that the girl whom Mrs. COURTLAND brought every year from some unnamed place in the country, and introduced to everybody as her niece, was an impostor, which that foolish woman, in a freak of generosity, was thrusting upon society. The rumors died out for want of proof—and before LAURA's beauty and dignity—but now they are confirmed. She is some beggar's child.

Sue Earlie. What do you think we ought to do? (TRAFFORD *surrenders* PEARL *to* DEMILT, *and comes down.*)

Mrs. Van D. Tell it—tell it everywhere, of course. The best blood of New York is insulted by the girl's presence. (TRAFFORD *coming down.*)

Ray. (R. H.) What have you three girls got your heads together for? Some conspiracy, I know.

Mrs. Van D. (*To ladies.*) Go girls—tell it everywhere.

Ray. (*As the ladies distribute themselves about the groups.*) What is it all about? Your face is like a portrait of mystery.

Mrs. Van D. (*Shewing letter.*) Look at this, and tell me what it means.

Ray. (*Quickly*) Where did you get this?

Mrs. Van D It is you who must answer—and Society that will question. So LAURA is not a COURTLAND?

Ray. (*Overcome.*) You know, then,———

Mrs. Van D. Everything; and will you marry this creature? You cannot. Society will not permit your sacrifice.

Ray. This is not your business. Give me that letter.

Mrs. Van D. Certainly; take it. But let me say one word—its contents are known. In an hour every tongue will question you about this secret,—every eye will inquire.

Ray. I implore you! Do not breathe a word for her sake. *She turns scornfully away.*)

Mrs. Van D. The secret's not mine.

Ray. Who knows it?

Mrs. Van D. Look! (*Points to others who are grouped about whispering and motioning towards* RAY. PEARL *enters here* E., *and speaks to lady and gents* L. C.)

Ray. (*Wildly.*) What will they do?

Mrs. Van D. Expose her! Expel her from society in which she is an intruder!

Ray. You dare not!

[PEARL *comes forward* L.

Pearl. O, RAY! What is the meaning of this?

Ray. (*Bitterly.*) It means that society is a terrible avenger of insult. Have you ever heard of the Siberian wolves? When one of the pack falls through weakness, the others devour him. It is not an elegant comparison—but there is something wolfish in society. LAURA has mocked it with a pretence, and society, which is made up of pretences, will bitterly resent the mockery.

Mrs. Van D. Very good! This handsome thief has stolen your breeding as well as your brains, I see.

Ray. If you speak a word against her, I will say that what you utter is a lie!

Mrs. Van D. As you please, we will be silent. But you will find that the world speaks most forcibly when it utters no sound.

Pearl. O, go and prevent her coming here.

Ray. That I can do, (*going up hastily sees* LAURA *entering at* C. D) Too late. (*He retreats* R. C)

Mrs. Van D. Come girls! Let us look 'after our things. They are no longer safe when such an accomplished thief enters.

(*Music low as* LAURA *enters, continues while all except* PEARL *and* RAY *pass out, eyeing her superciliously.* LAURA C. PEARL R.)

Pearl. RAY, RAY, why do you not come to her?

Mrs. Van D. (*Up* C. *of stage, surrounded by others.*) Are you no coming with us TRAFFORD?

Pearl. (*To* LAURA.) Let us go home.

Laura. No; stay with *him.*, (*pointing to* RAY, *who has held off.*) He shall not suffer the disgrace long! (*About to faint,* RAY *rushes forward she proudly waves him away.*) It is Heaven's own blow.

PICTURE—*Quick Curtain,*

R. RAY LAURA AND PEARL, C. Party at back.

ACT II.

(*Green Cl. th down.*)

SCENE I.—*Interior of a Basement. Street and railings seen through window at back. Entrance to* F. *from* D. F. L. H. *Stove with long pipe in fire-place,* R. U. E. *Table between two windows at back, with flowers, &c Humble furniture. Table* C. *three chairs. Closet* U. E. L. H.

PEACHBLOSSOM *is discovered polishing stove* R. K. *a slip-shod girl a la Funchon.*

SONG—PEACH:

A lordly knight and a lovely dame, were walking in the meadow,
But a jealous rival creeping came a-watching in the shadow;
They heeded not, but he whet his knife and dogg'd them in the shadow.
The knight was brave, and the dame was true, the rival fared but badly;
For the knight he drew and ran him through, and left him groaning sadly,
The knight and dame soon wedded were, with bells a-chiming gladly.

Peach. (*Talking while working.*) The stove won't shine. It's the fault of the polish I know. That boy that comes here, just fills the bottles with mud, and calls it stove polish. Only let me catch him. Ah! Ah! (*threatning gesture with brush.*) I declare I'd give it up if I didn't want to make everything look smart, before MISS NINA comes in. MISS NINA is the only friend I ever had, since I ran away from MOTHER JUDAS. I wonder where old JUDAS is now? I know she's drunk; she always was; perhaps that's why she never tried to find out what became of me. If she did she could not take me away. MISS NINA begged me off a policeman. I belong to her. I wonder why she ain't got any other friends? She's awful mysterious. Tells me never to let any strangers see her. She's afraid of somebody, I know. It looks just as if she was hiding. I thought only bad girls, such as I, had to hide. If I was good and pretty like her, I wouldn't hide from the President. (*Still polishing.*) (JUDAS *appears at window with basket of ornaments, &c.*)

Judas. Hum! Is your ma in my dear?

Peach. (*Starting.*) Oh! (*aside.*) Old JUDAS! She's found me out at last. No she h'aint, or she'd have got me by the hair before she spoke. That's *her* way.

Judas. (*Coming in at door.* PEACH *keeps her back towards her.*) Any old clothes to change for chany, my dear? Where's your ma's old skirts and shawls, my pet. Get 'em quick before mother comes in, and I'll give you a beautiful chany mug or a tea-pot for them. Come here, my ducky—see the pretty—(*recognizes* PEACH.) Eh! why you jail-bird, what are you doing here? Are you sneakin' it? Answer me, or I'll knock your head agin the wall. (*Catches her by the hair.*)

Peach. You just leave me be? I'm honest I am! I'm good.

Judas. You're good? Where's my shoe? I'll take the goodness out of you.

Peach. Oh, oh! please don't beat me. I ain't good. I'm only trying to be.

Judas. You're only trying to be, eh? Trying to be good, and here's me as was a-weeping every night, thinking as you was sent up for six months. Who're you living with—you ain't a-keeping house, are you?

Peach. I'm living with MISS NINA.

Judas. NINA, what's she, concert-saloon girl?

Peach. No, she's a lady.

Judas. A lady—and have such baggage as you about. Where's my shoe, I'll make you speak the truth.

Peach. I don't know what she is. She met me when the police was taking me up for loafin' down Hudson Street, and she begged me off.

Judas. Has she any money?

Peach. No, she's poor.

Judas. Any nice clothes?

Peach. O, she's got good clothes.

Judas. Where are they?

Peach. Locked up, and she's got the key.

Judas. You're lying, I see it in your eye. You're always shame-faced when you are telling the truth, and now you're as bold as brass. Where's my shoe? (*making a dash at her.*)

Peach. (*Shouting.*) There's MISS NINA (*as if curtseying to some one behind* JUDAS.) Good morning, miss.

Judas. (*Changing her tone.*) Ah! my pretty dear! What a good lady to take you in and give you a home. (*Turns and discovers the deception—in a rage.*) You hussy, (PEACH *retreats*) wait till I get you in my clutches again, my lady; and it won't be long. MISS NINA takes care of you, does she. Who will take care of her? Let her look to it. (LAURA *enters* D. F. *plainly dressed, at back.*) Beg pardon, Miss, I just called to see if you had any old clothes you'd like to exchange.

Laura. No, I don't want anything, my good woman.

Judas. (*Eyeing her sharply and going to door.*) That's her—I'd know her anywheres! (*Malicious glance, and exit.*)

Laura. You've been very good this morning, BLOSSOM. The room is as nice as I could wish.

Peach. Please 'm, I tried because you are so good to me. (LAURA *taking off her shawl and things.*) Shall I sweep out the airy? (LAURA *does not answer.*) I guess I'd better—then she'll be alone, as she loves to be. (*Takes broom and exit,* D. F.)

Laura (*Solos. Opening a package and taking out photographs.*) No pay yet for coloring, 'till I have practiced a week longer. Then I shall have all the work I can do. They say at the photographer's I color well, and the best pictures will be given me. The best! Already I have had beneath my brush so many faces that I know, friends of the old days. The silent eyes seem to wonder at me for bringing them to this strange and lowly home. (*Picking up letters from table.*) Letters; ah! answers to my advertisement for employment. No, only a circular "To the lady of this house." What's that! (*Starting*) only BLOSSOM sweeping. Every time there is a noise I dread the entrance of some one that knows me. But they could never find me in New York, I left them all too secretly and suddenly None of them can expect I would have descended to

this. But it is natural, everything will find its level. I sprang from poverty, and I return to it. POOR PEARL. How she must have wondered the next morning — LAURA gone? But three months have passed, and they have forgotten me. RAY will cheer her. (*Wrangling outside*, PEACHBLOSSOM *bursts in dragging* BERMUDAS, *with his professional tape, pins, blacking and baskets*, D. F.

Peach. Here he is m'm.

Ber. Leave go, I tell yer, or I'll make yer.

Laura. What is the matter?

Peach. He's the boy that sold me that stove polish what isn't stove polish.

Ber. What is it then—s-a-a-y?

Peach. It's mud! it's mud at ten pence a bottle.

Ber. Ah! Where could I get mud? Ain't the streets clean? Mud's dearer than stove polish now.

Peach. And your matches is wet, and your pins won't stick, and your shoe-strings is rotten, there now!

Ber. Well, how am I to live; it ain't my fault, it's the taxes. Ain't I got to pay my income tax, and how am I to pay it if I gives you your money's worth? Do you think I'm Stewart—Sa-a-y?

Laura. Do let the boy alone, BLOSSOM. Send him away. (*Enter* PEANUTS *at door flat.*)

Peanuts. Extra! Hello, BERMUDAS! how's your sister? Papers, Miss. Extra! Revolution in Mexico!

Laura. Dear, dear, this is the way I'm worried from morning till night.

Ber. Here, just you get out! This is my beat.

Peanuts. Vell, I ain't blacking or hairpins now, I'm papers—How'm I hurting you?

Ber. Vell, I'm papers at four o'clock, and this is my beat. Take care of me, I'm in training for a fight. I'm a bruiser, I am.

Peanuts. Hold yer jaw. (*they fight.*)

Peach. (*Beats them with broom.*) Get out with you, Both of you.

(*Grand escapade and exit of boys.* D. F.)

Laura. Don't let be troubled in this way again. Have you got the things for dinner?

Peach. Lor, no, miss! It's twelve o'clock, and I forgot!

(PEACH *gets shawl, big bonnet from hooks on the wall, basket from closet, while* LAURA *opens her pocket-book for money.*)

Laura. What did we have for dinner yesterday, BLOSSOM?

Peach. Beefsteak, 'm. Let's have some leg o' mutton to-day. We've never had that.

Laura. But I don't know how to cook it. Do you?

Peach. No, but I'd just slap it on, and it's sure to come out right.

Laur. Slap it on what?

Peach. The gridiron.

Laura. (*Giving money.*) No, we'd better not try a leg of mutton to-day. Get some lamb chops, we know how to manage them.

Peach. (*As she is going.*) Taters, as usual, 'mum?

Laura. Yes; and stop BLOSSOM—while you're buying the chops, just ask the butcher—off hand—you know—how he would cook a leg of mutton, if he were going to eat it himself!- as if you wanted to know for yourself.

Peach. Yes'm—but I'm sure it's just as good broiled as fried

[*Exit* D. F

Laura. Now to be cook. (*Laughing.*) "The Tuesday Sociable" ought to see me now. Artist in the morning, cook at noon, artist in the afternoon. (*Snorkey raps at the door* F. *and enters.*)

Snorkey. (*With letter.*) Beg pardon, is there anybody here as answers to the name of A. B. C.?

Laura. (*Aside.*) My advertisement for work.—Yes, give it to me.

Snorkey. (*Seeing her face.*) If I'd been taking something this morning, 'I'd say that I'd seen that face in a different sort of place from this.

Laura. Is there anything to pay? Why do you wait?

Snorkey. Nothing, Miss. It's all right. (*Going—and aside.*) But it ain't all right, SNORKEY, old boy! (*Goes out after looking at her, stops at window, and gazes in.*)

Laura. (*Without noticing him, opening letter.*) Yes, an answer to my advertisement. (*Reads.*) *To A. B. C.:* "*Your advertisement promises that you are a good linguist, and can teach children of any age. I have two daughters for whom I wish to engage your services while on a tour of Europe. Call at seven o'clock, this evening, at No.* 207 *W.* 34*th Street.* ANNERSLEY." Hope at last—a home, and in another land soon. I was sure the clouds would not always be black above me! (*Kisses letter.* SNORKEY *re-entering.*)

Snorkey. Miss, I say, Miss. (LAURA *starts.*)—Sh———

Laura. What do you want?

Snorkey. Only one word—and perhaps it may be of service to you. I'd do anything to serve you.

Laura. And why me?

Snorkey. I'm a blunt fellow, Miss, but I hope my way don't offend. Ain't you the lady that I brought a bouquet to on New Year's night—not here, but in a big house, all bright and rich—and who was so kind to a poor soldier?

Laura. (*Faint and leaning against chair.*) Whoever you may be, promise to tell no one you saw me here.

Snorkey. No fear, Miss! I promise.

Laura. Sacredly!

Snorkey. No need to do more than promise, Miss—I keeps my word. I promised Uncle Sam I'd stick to the flag—though they tore my arm off, and by darnation I stuck. I don't want to tell on you Miss. I want to tell on some one else.

Laura. What do you mean?

Snorkey. They're looking for you

Laura. Who?

Snorkey. BYKE. (LAURA *utters a loud cry and sinks on chair.*) He's on it day and night. I've got his money in my pocket now, and you've got his letter in your hand this minute.

(LAURA *drops the letter in dismay.*

Laura. This?

Snorkey. Yes, it his writin'—looks like a woman's, don't it? Lord! the snuff that man's up to, would make BARNUM sneeze his head off. He's kept me in hand, 'cause he thinks I know you, having seen you that once. Every day he reads the advertisements, and picks out a dozen or so and says to me: "SNORKEY, that's like my little pet," and then he sits down and answers them

and gets the advertisers to make appointments with him, which he keeps regularly, and regularly comes back cussing at his ill luck. See here Miss, I've a bundle of answers to deliver, as usual, to advertisers. I calls 'em BYKE's Target Practice, and this time, you see, he's accidentally hit the mark.

Laura. For Heaven's sake do not betray me to him! I've got very little money, I earn it hardly; but take it, take it—and save me. (*Offers money.*)

Snorkey. No, Miss; not a cent of it. Though BYKE is a devil, and would kick me hard if he thought I would betray him.

Laura. I don't want you to suffer for my sake, take the money.

Snorkey. No, I stood up to be shot at for thirteen dollars a month, and I can take my chances of a kickin' for nothing. But BYKE ain't the only one Miss, there's another's looking for you.

Laura. (*Her look of joy changing to fear.*) Another! Who?

Snorkey. (*Approaching smilingly and confidential.*) MR. TRAFFORD. (LAURA *turns aside despairingly.*) He's been at me every day for more than six weeks. "SNORKEY" says he, "do you remember that beautiful young lady you brought the bouquet to on New Year's night?" "Well," says I, "Capt'n, the young lady I slightly disremember, but the cakes and wine I got there that night I shall never forget." "Search for that young lady," says he, "and when you find her"—

Laura. No, no, no; not even he must know. Do you hear—not he—not anyone. You have served them well; serve me and be silent.

Snorkey. Just as you please, Miss, but I hate to serve you by putting your friends off the track—it don't seem natural—BYKE I don't mind; but the Capt'n wouldn't do you any harm. Just let me give him a bit of a hint. (LAURA *makes an entreating gesture.*) Well I'm mum, but as I've only got one hand, it's hard work to hold my tongue. (*Going.*) Not the least bit of a hint? (LAURA *appealingly and then turns away.*) They say when a woman says no, she means yes! I wonder if I dare tell her that he's not far off. Perhaps I'd better not. But I can tell him. (*Exit* D. F.

Laura. How shall I ever escape that dreadful man? And RAY searching for me too! Our friends then remember us as well as our enemies. (PEACHBLOSSOM *enters quickly* D. F. *shutting the door behind her, with basket which she places on table* C.)

Peach. C Miss NINA, whatever is into the people? There's a strange man coming down the entry. I heard him asking that red cap fellow about you.

Laura. BYKE! Fasten the door quick, (PEACH *runs to door, it is slightly opened, she pushes it against some one on the other side.*)

Peach. O dear! He's powerful strong, I can't keep it shut. Go away you willin! Oh! (*The door is forced and* RAY *enters.*)

Ray. (*Advancing* C.) LAURA—It is I.

Laura. (R. H.) RAY! (*Shrinks from him.*)

Ray. Dear LAURA! (*He stops as he becomes conscious that* BLOSSOM *with her basket on her arm and her bonnet hanging on her back is staring at him*) I say, my girl, havn't you some particular business somewhere else to attend to?

Peach. (*Seriously,* L. H.) No, sir; I've swept the sidewalk and gone a marketing, and now I'm in doors and I mean to stay.

Ray. And wouldn't you oblige me by going for a sheet of paper

and an envelope? Here's a dollar—try and see how slow you can be.

Peach. (*Firmly.*) You can't sheet of paper me, mister; I'm protecting Miss NINA, and I'm not to be enveloped.

Laura. Go as the gentleman asks you, BLOSSOM.

Peach. Oh! (*Takes money, fixes her bonnet.*) First it's "Keep the man out," now it's "Let him stay in alone with me." But I suppose she's like all of us—it makes a great difference which man it is.

(*Exit,* D. F.

Ray. (*After watching* PEACH *out.*) LAURA, when I approached you, you shrank from me. Why did you so?

Laura. Look around you and find your answer.

Ray. (*Shuddering.*) Pardon me, I did not come here to insult your misery. When I saw you I forgot everything else.

Laura. (R. C.) And now it's time for us to remember everything. I told you to look around that you might understand that in such a place I am no longer LAURA COURTLAND, nor anything I used to be. But I did not ask your pity. There is no misery here.

Ray. Alone, without means, exposed to every rudeness, unprotected, is this not misery for you?

Laura. (*Laughing.*) Oh, it's not so bad as that.

Ray. LAURA, don't trifle with me. You cannot have exchanged everything that made you happy, for this squalid poverty, and not feel it deeply.

Laura. I have not time to feel anything deeply. *Takes basket up, goes to table, busies herself about preparing dinner.*) I work from sunrise till night, and I sleep so soundly that I have not even dreams to recall the past. Just as you came in I was about to cook our dinner. Only think—lamb chops!

Ray. Lamb chops! It makes me shudder to hear you speak.

Laura. Does it? Then wait till I get the gridiron on the fire, and you'll shiver. And if you want to be transfixed with horror, stop and take dinner.

Ray. I will not hear you mock yourself thus, LAURA. I tell you in this self-banishment you have acted thoughtlessly—you have done wrong.

Laura. Why?

Ray. Because, let the miserable creatures who slandered you say what they might, you had still a home and friends.

Laura. A home! Where the very servants would whisper and point. Friends who would be ashamed to acknowledge me. You are mistaken. That is neither home nor friendship.

Ray. And you are resolved to surrender the past forever.

Laura. The past has forgotten me in spite of myself.

Ray. Look at me.

Laura. (*Coming down,* C.) Well then, there's one who has not forgotten me, but I desire that he may. You speak to me of bitterness. Your presence, your words, cause me the first pang I have felt since the night I fled unnoticed from my chamber, and began my life anew. Therefore I entreat you to leave me, to forget me.

Ray. LAURA, by the tie that once bound us!—

Laura. (*Going up.*) Yes, *once.* It *is* a long time ago.

Ray. What have I said?—the tie which still—

Laura. (*Sharply turning.*) Mr. TRAFFORD, must I remind you

of that night, when all arrayed themselves so pitilessly against me? When a gesture from you might have saved me! And you saw me sink without stretching a finger to the woman who had felt the beating of your heart. No, you made your choice then—the world without me. I make my choice now—the wide, wide, world without you.

Ray. I have been bitterly punished, for we are never so humiliated as when we despise ourselves. But, by the Heaven above us both, I love you LAURA, I have never ceased to love you.

Laura. I thank you. I know how to construe the love which you deny in the face of society, to offer me behind its back.

Ray. Will you drive me mad! I tell you LAURA, your misery, your solitude is as nothing to the anguish I have suffered. The maniac who in his mental darkness, stabs to the heart the friend he loved, never felt in returning reason the remorse my error has earned me. Every day it says to me: "You have been false to the heart that loved you, and you shall account for it to your conscience all your life. You shall find that the bitterest drops in the cup of sorrow, are the tears of the woman you have forsaken." And it is true. O, forgive me—have pity on me.

Laura. (*Moved.*) I forgive you. Yes, and I pity you—and, so good-bye, forever.

Ray. Of course, I am nothing to you now. That is some comfort to me. I have only to be sorry on my own account. But, I come to you on behalf of others.

Laura. Whom?

Ray. My mother and PEARL. They ask for you. For them I have sought you, to urge you to return to them.

Laura. Dear little PEARL.

Ray. Yes, she has been quite ill.

Laura. She has been ill?

Ray. Think of those two hearts which you have caused to suffer and do not drive me from you. It is not only wealth, luxury and refinement which you have surrendered—you have also cast away those greater riches: loving and devoted friends. But they shall persuade you themselves. Yes, I'll go and bring them to you, you cannot resist their entreaties.

Laura. No, no, they must not come here. They must never know where I hide my shame, and you must never reveal it.

Ray. I promise it, if you will go to them with me. Think, they will insist on coming unless you do.

Laura. Poor PEARL! If I go with you, you promise not to detain me—to permit me to come back, and to trouble me and my poor life no more?

Ray. I promise; but I know you will release me from it when you see them. I will get a carriage. So that no one will meet you. Wait for me, I shall not be long. It is agreed?

Laura. (*Smiling.*) Yes, it is agreed.

[*Enter* PEACHBLOSSOM, D. F. *with a sheet of paper, foolscap, and some enormous envelopes.*

Peach. (L. H.) Here they are.

Ray. C. That's a good girl, keep them till I come back. In half an hour, LAURA, be ready. [*Exit* D. F.

Peach. (*With an air.*) What's he going to do in half an hour?

Laura. He's going to take me away with him for a little while. BLOSSOM, and while I'm gone, I wish you to be a good girl, and watch the house, and take care of it till I return.

Peach. I don't believe it. You won't return. (*Crying.*) That's what our SAL said when she went off with her young man, and she never came back at all. You shan't go; I hate him. He shan't take you away.

Laura. BLOSSOM! (*Who is getting ready, putting her hat on, &c.*)

Peach. I don't care. If you go away, I'll go away; I'll bite and scratch him if he comes back. (*Fiercely tearing up the paper and envelopes.*) Let him come back. Let him dare come back.

Laura. BLOSSOM, you're very wicked. Go into the corner this minute and put your apron over your head.

Peach. (*Crying at* LAURA'S *feet.*) O, please, MISS NINA, let me go with you, and I'll be so good and not say a word to any one. Do let me go with you. Let me ask him to let me go with you. (*Figure passes the window.*) Here he is; I see him coming.

Laura. Run! run! open the door. (PEACH *runs to door; throws it open, disclosing* BYKE.) (*Exclamation of horror from* LAURA.)

Byke. (*Advancing.*) Ah, my dear little runaway! Found you at last,—and just going out. How lucky! I wanted you to take a walk with me.

Laura. Instantly leave this place!

Byke. How singular! you are always ordering me out, and I am always coming in. We want a change. I will go out, and I request you to come with me.

Laura. BLOSSOM, go find an officer. Tell him this wretch is insulting me.

Byke. BLOSSOM? ah,—exactly! Here you, JUDAS! (JUDAS *appears at door, down* L. H.) (PEACH *crosses to* LAURA R.)

Judas. O, Miss, save me!

Byke. (*Throws* PEACH *over to* JUDAS, L.) Take care of that brat. And as for you, daughter,—come with me.

Laura. Daughter!

Byke. Yes; it is time to declare myself. Paternal feeling has been too long smothered in my breast. Come to my arms, my child, my long-estranged child! (*Takes out dirty handkerchief and presses his eyes with pretended feeling.*)

Laura. God! is there no help coming? (*She attempts to escape.* BYKE *seizes her.*)

Byke. What, unfilial girl! You take advantage of a father's weakness, and try to bolt! (*Clutching her by the arm.*) Come, go with me; and cheer my old age. Aint I good, to take you back after all these years?

PICTURE.—*Quick Curtain.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Tombs Police Court. Long high desk, with three seats, across back from* R. *to* L. *on Platform. Railing in front. Railing around* L. H. *with opening* C. *In front of railing, a bench* R. *and* L. H. *Gate in* C. *of railing.*

JUDGE BOWLING *and another Justice seated behind high desk,* C. *with clerk on his* L. H. *Justice is reading paper, with his feet upon desk,* R. H. *Policeman at* R. *and* L., 1, 2, E. POLICEMAN 9-9-9 *at gate,* C. *Hard-looking set of men and women on benches,* R. *and* L. *Lawyer* SPLINTER *is talking to* RAFFERDI, *who is in crowd down* R.

(*As the curtain rises noisy buzz is heard.*)

Bow. SMITHERS, keep those people quiet. (9-9-9 *handling people roughly.*) Here—easy, officer; treat those poor people decently. Well, whom have you got there?

9-9-9. (*Going to* 1, E. L. H., *and dragging urchin within railing.*) Pickpocket, your Honor. Caught in the act.

Bow. What's he got to say for himself? Nothing, eh? What's his name?

9-9-9. (*Stooping down to boy as if asking him.*) Says his name is PETER RICH.

Bow. You stand a poor chance, RICH! Take him away. (BOWLING *consults with other Justice, as the boy is taken off* E. R. H.)

Splinter. (*To* RAFFERDI, *who has his monkey and organ.*) So you want to get out, eh? How much money have you got?

Raff. Be jabers! half a dollar in cents is all the money I'm worth in the world.

Splin. Give it to me. I thought you organ fellows were Italians.

Raff. Devil doubt it! Aint I got a monkey?

9-9-9. Here, you; come up here. (*Takes* RAFFERDI *inside the railing,* L. H.)

Bow. Now, then; what's this, officer?

9-9-9. (RAFFERDI *takes stand* R.) Complaint of disturbing the neighborhood.

Bow. What have you got to say for yourself?

Splin. (R. H.) If your Honor please, I appear for this man.

Bow. Well, what have you got to say for him?

Splin. Here is an unfortunate man, your Honor—a native of Sunny Italy. He came to our free and happy country, and being a votary of music, he bought an organ and a monkey, and tried to earn his bread. But the myrmidons of the law were upon him, and the Eagle of Liberty drooped his pinions as RAFFERDI was hurried to his dungeon

Bow. RAFFERDI!—You're an Irishman, ain't you? What do you mean by deceiving us?

Raf. Sure I didn't. It's the lawyer chap there. I paid him fifty cints and he's lying out the worth of it.

Bow. You fellows are regular nuisances! I've a great mind to commit you.

Splin. Commit him! If the Court please—reflect—commit him—to prison—what will become of his monkey?

Bow Well, I'll commit him too.

Splin. You cannot. I defy the Court to find anything in the Statutes authorizing the committal of the monkey.

Bow. Well, we'll leave out the monkey.

Splin. And if the Court please, what is the monkey to do in the wide world, with his natural protector in prison? I appeal to those kindlier feelings in your honor's breast—which must ever temper justice with mercy. This monkey is perhaps an orphan!

Bow. (*Laughing.*) Take them both away, and don't let me catch you here again Mr. RAFFERDI or you'll go to jail.

[*Exit* RAFFERDI 1 E. L. H. SPLINTER *goes down*, RAF. *Exits.*

9-9-9. (*Pulling* SAM *who is drunk out of a crowd.*) Get up here.

Sam. (*Noisily.*) Look yah—don't pull me around.

Bow. Silence there! what's all this noise about?

Sam. Whar's de Court? I want to see de Judge.

Splin. (*Approaching him.*) My colored friend can I assist you?

Sam. Am you a Counsellor-at-Law?

Splin. Yes, retain me! How much money have you got?

Sam. I ain't got no money—but I've got a policy ticket. It' bound to draw a prize.

Splin. Got any pawn tickets?

Sam. Ob course. (*Giving him a handful.*)

Bow. Well, what's the charge?

9-9-9. (R. H. C.) Drunk and disorderly.

Bow. Well, my man, what have you to say?

Sam. Dis here gemman represents me.

Splin. We admit, if the Court please, that we were slightly intoxicated, but we claim the privilege, as the equal of the white man.

Bow. (*To Clerk.*) Very good! Commit him for ten days.

Splin. But this is an outrage, your honor.

Bow. (*To Officer.*) Take him off! (*Motioning to* SAM.) (SPLINTER *sits down discomfited,* SAM *very wroth.*)

Sam. What?

Bow. Take him away.

Sam. Look here, judge, hab you read the Civil Right Bill? You can't send dis nigger to prison while dat bill am de law of de land.

Bow. That'll do—remove him.

Sam. I ain't no gipsy, I'm one of de Bureau niggers, I am! Where am de law? Don't touch me, white man! Dis am corruption—dis am 'ficial delinquency.

9-9-9. (*Collars him and carries him off.*)

Sam. Mr. STEVENS! THADDEUS! (*Exit* R. H. 1 E.

Bow. Any more prisoners? (*Noise* L. 1, E.) What noise is that (*Officer goes out.* BYKE *enters, followed by the officer who escort* LAURA.)

Byke. Where is the judge? O, where is the good, kind judge

Bow. Well, my dear sir, what is the matter?

Byke. O, sir, forgive my tears. I'm a broken-hearted man!

Bow. Be calm, my dear sir. Officer, bring this gentleman a chair. [*Officer hands chair* R. C.

Byke. Ah, sir, you are very good to a poor distressed father, whose existence has been made a desert on account of his child.

Bow. Repress your emotion, and tell me what you want.

Byke I want my child.

Bow. Where is she?

Byke. She is here, sir—here—my darling, my beautiful child, and so unfilial—so unnatural.

Bow. How is this, young lady?

Laura. (*Standing inside railing* L. H.) It is all a lie. He is not my father.

Byke. Not your father? Oh, dear, oh, dear, you will break my heart.

Bow. This needs some explanation. If not his child, who are you?

Laura. I am—I dare not say it. I know not who I am, but I feel that he cannot be my father.

Byke. O, dear—O—

Bow. (*Sharply.*) Silence! (*To* LAURA, *sternly.*) You say you don't know who you are. Do you know this man?

Laura. Yes.

Bow. Where, and with whom do you live?

Laura. I have lived alone for four months.

Bow. And with whom did you live before that?

Laura. O, forgive me, if I seem disobedient—but I cannot tell.

Bow. Then I must look to this gentleman for information.

Byke. And I will gladly give it. Yes, sir, I will gladly tell. She was taken from me years ago, when she was but a little child, by rich people who wanted to adopt her. I refused—they paid me—I was poor—I was starving—I forebore to claim her—she was happy, but they turned her forth four months ago into the street. I could not see her suffer—my child—the prop of my declining days. I begged her to come—she refused. My enemies had poisoned my daughter's mind against *me*, her father. I am still poor. I taught school, but I have saved a little money, only for her.

Bow. How old is she?

Byke. Nineteen.

Bow. (*To* LAURA.) Your father is your legal guardian during your minority, and is entitled to your custody. Why are you so undutiful? Try to correct this.

Byke. Oh, bless you, dear, good judge for those words.

Laura. O, have I no friends, must I go with him?

Bow. Certainly.

Laura. Anything then. Exposure! Disgrace, rather than that [*Judges consult. Enter* SNORKEY L. *goes opposite to* LAURA *and signals her.*

Byke. (*Aside.*) SNORKEY! the devil!

Snorkey. (*Crossing to* LAURA L. C.) Can I help you miss? Only tell me what to do, and if it takes my other arm off, I'll save you.

Laura. Yes, yes, you can help me! (*To Judge.*) Will you let me send a message?

Bow. You may do that.

Laura. Run to that house—not my house—but the one in which you saw me first. Do you remember it?

Snorkey. Don't I, and the wine and cakes.

Laura. Ask for Miss PEARL. Tell her where I am. Tell her to come instantly. (SNORKEY *going.*) Stay—tell her to bring the ebony box in mother's cabinet. Can you recollect?

Snorkey. Can I what? Gaze at this giant intellect and don't ask me! The ebony box—all right—I'm off.

[*Exit* L.

Bow. It would have been as well, young lady, to have answered frankly at first.

Byke. O, sir! Don't be harsh with her! Don't be harsh with my poor child!

Bow. Your father has a most Christian disposition.

Laura. Sir, I have told you, and I now solemnly repeat it, that this man is no relation of mine. I desire to remain unknown, for I am most unfortunate; but the injustice you are about to commit forces me to reveal myself, though in doing so I shall increase a sorrow already hard to bear. (SPLINTER *talks with* LAURA *aside.*)

Bow. We sit here to do right, according to the facts before us. And let me tell you, young lady, that your obstinate silence has more than convinced us that your father's statement is correct. Further, unless the witnesses you have sent for can directly contradict him, we shall not alter our decision.

Laura. Let it be so. He says he gave me into the care of certain wealthy people when I was a little child.

Byke. I am willing to swear to it.

Laura. (SPLINTER *watching effect of question.*) Then he will be able to describe the clothes in which I was dressed at the time. They were safely kept. I have sent for them.

Byke. Let them be produced—and I will recognize every little precious garment. (*Aside.*) This is getting ferociously hot for me! Ha! *Re-enter* SNORKEY *with* RAY *hastily* L. 1 E.

Snorkey. (*Excitedly.*) Here's a witness! Here's evidence!

9-9-9 *admonishes him.*

Laura. (RAY *takes her hand through the rail.*) RAY?

Bow. Who is this?

Ray. I am a friend, sir, of this lady.

Byke. He is a dreadful character—a villain who wants to lead my child astray! Don't—please don't let him contaminate her!

Bow. Silence! (*To* RAY.) Can you disprove that this young lady is his daughter.

Ray. His daughter? (*Looks at* LAURA.)

Laura. He knows nothing.

Bow. Let him answer. Come—have you any knowledge of this matter?

Ray. I had been told, sir, that———(LAURA *looks at him.*) No—I know nothing.

Laura Have you brought the ebony box? It contained the clothes which I wore when———

Ray. I understand; but in my haste, and not knowing your peril I brought nothing. But can you not remember them yourself?

Laura. Perfectly.

Ray. Write then! (*Handing her a memorandum book.*) To

Bow.) Sir, this lady will hand you a description of those articles which she wore when she was found, thirteen years ago. Then let this scoundrel be questioned—and if he fail to answer, I will accuse him of an attempted abduction.

Bow. That's the way.

Byke. (*Aside.*) It will not be a great effort for me to remember.

Bow. (*Taking the book from* RAY.) Now, sir, I will listen to you.

(RAY *and* LAURA *are eager and expectant.*)

BYKE. (*Deliberately.*) A soiled gingham frock, patched and torn. (LAURA *gives a shudder and turns aside.*)

Bow. What kind of shoes and stockings?

Byke. Her feet were bare.

Bow. And the color of her hood?

Byke. Her dear little head was uncovered.

Bow. (*Handing book back.*) He has answered correctly.

Laura. It is useless to struggle more! Heaven alone can help me!

Ray. You can see, sir, that this lady cannot be his daughter. Look at her and at him!

Bow. I only see that he has pretty well proven his case. She must go with him, and let her learn to love him as a daughter should.

Ray. She shall not! I will follow him wherever he goes.

Byke. (*Taking* LAURA'S *hand.*) I appeal to the Court.

Bow. Officer, take charge of that person, until this gentleman is gone.

Byke. (*Coming forward with* LAURA *who is dumb and despairing.*) My child, try and remember the words of the good judge. "You must learn to love me as a daughter should." (*Leading her towards* R. H.)

Snorkey. (*To* RAY.) Stay here, sir, I'll track him. No one suspects me!

[*Music, Tableau,—Scene closes in.*

LAURA R. H. BYKE R. C. SNORKEY C. RAY L. H.

SCENE II.—EXTERIOR OF THE TOMBS, *with ballads on strings upon the railings. Enter* JUDAS *followed by* PEACHBLOSSOM L. H. 1 E.

Peach. Only tell me where he has taken her, and I'll go with you—indeed I will.

Judas. We don't want you, we wouldn't be bothered with you—she's our game.

Pearl. What are you going to do with her?

Judas. Do! why we'll coin her. Turn her into dollars. We've had it on foot for a long time.

Peach. What! Is she the rich young lady I heard you and BYKE speak of so often before I got away from you?

Judas. (*Savagely.*) Heard me speak of! What did you hear?

Peach. (*Dancing off.*) O, I know! I know more than you suppose. When you used to lock me up in the back cellar for running away, you forgot that doors had key-holes.

Judas. (*Aside.*) This girl must be silenced.

Peach. What are you muttering about—don't you know how BYKE used to throw you down and trample on you for muttering?

Judas. I'll have you yet, my beauty.

Peach. I think you are a great fool, JUDAS.

Judas. Likely. Likely

Peach. Why don't you give up Miss NINA to that handsome young gentleman? He'd pay you well for the secret. He'd give his whole fortune for her, I know, I saw it in his face. And he'd treat you better than BYKE does.

Judas. Not yet my chicken; besides, what does he care for her now? Isn't he going to marry the other girl—she's the one will pay when the time comes—but we intend to hold the goods 'till the price is high.

Peach. Then, if you won't, I'll tell all as I knows. I'll tell him all I used to overhear about babies and cradles, and he'll understand it perhaps, if I don't.

Judas. (*Aside.*) Hang her—she'll make mischief. (*Aloud.*) Well, come along with me, my beauty, and I'll talk it over with you.

Peach. Don't touch me, I won't trust you with your hands on me. (JUDAS *makes a dart at her.*) I knew that was your game But I'll be even with you yet. (*Dancing off tantalizingly before* JUDAS. *Both exit* R. H.)

(*Enter* SNORKEY R. 1 E.)

Snorkey. (*Despondent.*) I'm no more use than a gun without a trigger. I tried to follow BYKE, but he smoked me in a minute. Then I tried to make up with him, but he swore that I went against him in Court, and so he wouldn't have me at no price. Then I ran after the carriage that he got into with the lady, till a damn'd old woman caught me for upsetting her apple stand and bursting up her business. What am I to do now? I'm afraid to go back to the Cap'n, *he* won't have me at any price either, I suppose. (*Gazing at ballads, hand in his pockets—going from one to the other. Enter* BERMUDAS L. 1 E. *with ballads in his hands and preparing to take others off the line as if to shut up shop.*

Ber. (*After gazing at* SNORKEY.) What are you a doing of—sa-a-y? (*Snorkey takes no notice.*) This here's one of the fellows as steals the bread of the poor man. Reading all the songs for nothin, and got bags of gold at home. Sa-a-y!

Snorkey. Well, youngster, what are you groaning about? Have you got the cholera?

Ber. Ah! What are you doing? Taking the bloom off my songs? You're read them 'ere ballads till they're in rags.

Snorkey. I was looking for the "Prairie Bird."

Ber. Perary Bird! eh? There aint no perary bird. There's a "Perary Flower."

Snorkey. Now don't go into convulsions. I'll find it. (*Turns to songs.*)

Ber. Sa-ay—you needn't look no further for that bird! I've found him, and no mistake. He's a big Shanghae with a red comb and no feathers.

Snorkey. He's dropped on me.

Ber. Ain't you a mean cuss, sa-ay? Why don't you come down with your two cents, and support trade?

Snorkey. But I ain't got two cents. What's a fellow to do if he hasn't got a red?

Ber. (*Toning down.*) Haint you? Where's your messages?

Snorkey. Havn't had one go to-day.

Ber. Where do you hang out?

Snorkey. Nowheres.

Ber. My eye—no roost?

Snorkey. No.

Ber. I tell you what, come along with us—we've got a bully place—no rent—no taxes—no nothin.

Snorkey. Where is it?

Ber. Down under the pier!—I discovered it. I was in swimmin' and seed a hole and I went in. Lots of room, just the place for a quiet roost. We has jolly times every night I tell you on the dock; and when it is time to turn in we goes below, and has it as snug as a hotel; come down with us.

Snorkey, I will! These young rascals will help me track that scoundrel yet.

Ber. Now, help me to take in my show windows; it's time to shut up shop.

(*Enter* RAY TRAFFORD, L.)

Ray. If what that crazy girl has told me can be true, LAURA may yet be restored to her friends if not to me, for I have dispelled that dream for ever. But that villain must be traced immediately, or he will convey his victim far beyond our reach or rescue.

(SNORKEY *helping to take down songs, sees* TRAFFORD, *who has crossed to* R. H.)

Snorkey. Hollo! Cap'n!

Ray. The man of all I wanted. You tracked him?

Snorkey. They was too much for me, sir—two horses was—but I saw them turn into Greenwich street, near Jay.

Ray. This may give us a clue. I have learned from a girl who knows this fellow, that he has some hiding-place over the river, and owns a boat which is always fastened near the pier where the Boston Steamers are.

Snorkey. Well, Cap'n, if anything's to be done, you'll find me at Pier—what's the number of our pier, SHORTY?

Ber. Pier 30!—Down stairs!

Snorkey. Pier 30. That's my new home, and if you want me, say the word.

Ray. You will help me?

Snorkey. You bet, Cap'n. I was on Columbia's side for four years, and I'll fight for her daughters for the rest of my life, if you say so. If there's any fightin' count me in, Cap'n.

Ray. Thank you, brave fellow. Here take this—no nonsense—take it. Pier 30 is it?

Snorkey. Pier 30. (*Exit* TRAFFORD, R. 1 E.)

Ber. (*Eyeing money.*) How much, PERARY?

Snorkey. One—two—three—four—four dollars.

Ber. Four dollars! Sa-ay—Don't you want to buy a share in a paying business? I'm looking out for a partner with a cash capital, for the ballad business. Or I tell you what to do. Lay your money on me in a mill. I'm going to be a prize fighter, and get reported in the respectable dailies. "Rattling Mill, 99th round, BERMUDAS the victor, having knocked his antagonist into nowheres."

Snorkey. Come along, you young imp. I could floor you with

my own arm, and then the report would be: "25th round—SNORKEY came up first, while his antagonist showed great signs of distress."

Ber. Say, PERARY, what are you going to do with all that money?

Snorkey. I won't bet it on you, sure.

Ber. I'll tell you what to do, let's go and board at the Metropolitan Hotel for an hour.

Snorkey. What will we do for toothpicks?

Ber. Oh, go along. You can't get anything to eat for fou. dollars.

(*Exit* SNORKEY, BER. *squaring off* L. 1. E.

SCENE III.—*Foot of Pier* 30, *North River. Sea cloth down and working—A pier projecting into the river. A large cavity in front. Bow of a vessel at back, and other steamers, vessels and piers in perspective on either side. The flat gives view of Jersey City and the river shipping by starlight. Music of distant serenade heard.*

BYKE *enters sculling a boat*, R. 2d E. *and fastens his boat to the pier* L. H. *Old* JUDAS *is on the pier, smoking pipe, looking down.*

Judas. Have you fixed everything across the river?

Byke. Yes, I have a horse and wagon waiting near the shore to carry her to the farm. Has any one been around here.

Judas. Not a soul. I've been waiting here for an hour. What made you so long?

Byke. I pulled down the river for a spell to throw any spies off the track. It was necessary after what you told me of that girl's threat to blab about the Boston pier.

Judas. Pshaw! she'd never dare.

Byke. Never mind, it's best to be certain. Is the prize safe?

Judas. Yes, she was worn out, and slept when I came away. How her blood tells—she wouldn't shed a tear.

Byke. Bah! if she'd been more of a woman and set up a screaming, we shouldn't have been able to get her at all. Success to all girls of spirit, say I.

Judas. Don't you think it might be worth while to treat with this young spark, TRAFFORD, and hear what he has to offer?

Byke. Satan take him! no. That'll spoil your game about the other girl, PEARL. He was making up to her all right, and if he gets this one back he'll upset the whole game by marrying her. I tell you he's got the old feeling for her, spite of her running away. Now you can judge for yourself, and do as you please.

Judas. Then I do as you do—get her out of the city. When PEARL is married to him we can treat for LAURA'S ransom, by threatening them with the real recret.

Byke. Then that's settled. (*Taking out flask.*) Here's the precious infant's health. Do you think she'll go easy, or shall we drug her?

Judas. Just tell her it's to meet her beau and get her ransom, or give her a reason and she'll be as mild as a lamb.

Byke. Ha! let me get hold of her, and I'll answer she goes

across, reason or no reason. (BERMUDAS *calls outside* L. H.) There's a noise.

Judas. It's only the market boys coming down for a swim.

Byke. Softly then, come along. [*Music. Exeunt* L.

[*Enter* BER., PEANUTS, *and a couple other boys,* L.

Ber. Say, PEANUTS, go down and see if any of the fellows is come yet. (PEANUTS *scrambles down to hole in front on side of dock; comes out again.*)

Peanuts. There's nobody there.

Snorkey. (*without.*) Hollo!

Ber. Hollo! That's our new chum. Hollo! follow your front teeth, and you'll get here afore you knows it.

[*Enter* SNORKEY *with more boys,* L.

Snorkey. What a very airy location.

Ber. It's a very convenient hotel. Hot and cold saltwater baths at the very door of your bedrooms, and sometimes when the tide rises we has the bath brought to us in bed—doesn't we, PEANUTS?

Peanuts. That's so.

Snorkey. Come, what do you do before you go to bed?

Ber. We has a swarry. Say, one of you fellows, go down and bring up the piany forty. (PEANUTS *goes into hole and gets banjo.*) What'll I give you?

Snorkey. Something lively. (*Music, and dance by boys, ensue,—given according to capacity and talent. At the end of it, a general shout of jubilee; when—*

Sergeant of Patrol. (*Outside.*) Here, boys! less noise.

Ber. It's ACTON and the police. Let's go to bed. (BER. *and boys get down into hole.*)

Sergeant. (*Entering* L. *in patrol boat.*) If you boys don't make less noise, I'll have to clear you out.

Ber. (*On the pier.*) It's an extra occasion, Mr. ACTON;—we're having a distinguished military guest, and we're entertaining him. (*Boat passes out,* R.) Come along, PERARY, let's go to bed. (SNORKEY *is about to descend.*)

(*Enter* RAY TRAFFORD, L. *on pier.*)

Ray. Is that you, SNORKEY?

Snorkey. (*Quickly whispering.*) Here, sir. Anything turned up?

Ray. BYKE was overheard to say he intended crossing the river to-night; he will doubtless use that boat which he keeps by the Boston Pier. The river patrol are on the watch for him. But I will meet him before he can embark.

Snorkey. Which Boston Pier is it, Cap'n? there are three on this river.

Ray. Three!

Snorkey. Yes; one of them is two slips below. I tell you what, Cap'n: You get the officers, go by the shore way, search all the slips; I'll find a boat about here, and will drop down the river, and keep an eye around generally.

Voice. (*Without,* L. H.) This way, sir.

Ray. That's the patrol calling me. Your idea is a good one. Keep a sharp eye down the stream. [*Exit* L.

Snorkey. (*Alone.*) Now for my lay.

Ber. (*Popping his head up.*) Say, can't I do nothin? I'm the Fifth-Ward Chicken, and if there's any muss, let me have a shy.

Snorkey. No; get in and keep quiet. (BER. *disappears.*) I won-

der where I can find a boat. There ought to be plenty tied up about here. My eye! (*Discovering* BYKE'S) Here's one for the wishin'; sculls too. I'm in luck. Say, BERMUDAS, whose boat is this?

Ber. Yours, if you like Tie it loose.

(*Jumps down, enters boat, pushes off towards* R.

Ber. (*Inside.*) Keep your toe out of my ear!

(*Pause.*) [BYKE, LAURA, *and* JUDAS, *enter on pier from* L.

Laura. Is this the place? There is no one here; you have deceived me.

Byke. Well, we have, but we won't do so any longer.

Laura. What do you mean?

Byke. (*Drawing pistol.*) Do you see this? It is my dog Trusty. It has a very loud voice and a sharp bite; and if you scream out, I'll try if it can't outscream you. JUDAS, unfasten the boat.

Laura. What are you about to do? You will not murder me?

Byke. No; we only mean to take you to the other shore, where your friends won't think of finding you. Quick, JUDAS.

Judas. The boat's gone.

Byke. Damn you, what do you mean? Where is it? Here; hold her. (JUDAS *clutches* LAURA.) Where the devil is that boat?

Snorkey. (*Re-appearing in boat from* R.) Here!

Byke. SNORKEY! We're betrayed. Come. (*Drags* LAURA *towards* L.)

Snorkey. The police are there! Turn, you coward! Don't run from a one-armed man!

Byke. JUDAS, take her! (SNORKEY *strikes at him with oar.* BYKE *takes oar from him and strikes him; he falls in boat. The boys hear the noise, and scramble up at back. The patrol boat appears at* R., *with lights.*)

Snorkey. Help! BERMUDAS!

Ber. Hi! Ninety-ninth round! first blood for BERMUDAS! (*Jumps at* BYKE.)

Byke. (*Flinging* BER. *off.*) JUDAS, toss her over!

Judas throws LAURA *over back of pier.* RAY *enters* L. *Boys all get on pier and surround* BYKE, *fighting him. Officers enter at* L RAY *leaps into water after* LAURA.)

CURTAIN.

MOONLIGHT ON DURING SCENE.

ACT IV.

No carpet.

SCENE I.—*Long Branch. Ground floor of an elegant residence—open windows from floor to ceiling at back—opening upon a balcony or promenade. Perspective of the shore and sea in distance. Doors* R. *and* L. *Sunset.*

As the curtain rises to lively music, from R. *enter* PEARL, MRS. VAN DAM, SUE EARLIE, *and other ladies in summer costume*, DEMILT *and* WINDEL *with them.*

Pearl. And so the distinguished foreigner is in love with me? I thought he looked excessively solemn at the hop last night. Do you know, I can't imagine a more serious spectacle than a Frenchman or an Italian in love. One always imagines them to be sick. (*To* Mrs. V. D.) Do fasten my glove—there's a dear.

Mrs. D. Where's RAY?

Pearl. O, he's somewhere. I never saw such another. Isn't he cheerful? He never smiles, and seldom talks.

Mrs. V. D. But the foreigner does. What an ecstasy he was in over your singing; sing us a verse, won't you, while we're waiting for Ray?

All. It will be delightful—do.

Pearl. Well! [*Song introduced.*

(*Air; When the War is Over, Mary.*)

I.

Now the summer days are fading,
Autumn sends its dreary blast
Moaning through the silent forest
Where the leaves are falling fast.
Soon dread winter will enfold us—
Chilling in its arms of snow,
Flowers that the summer cherished,
Birds that sing, and streams that flow.

II.

Say, shall all things droop and wither,
That are born this Summer day?
Shall the happy love it brought us—
Like the flowers fade away?
No; be still thou flutt'ring bosom—
Seasons change and years glide by,
They may not harm what is immortal—
Darling,—love shall never die!

Pearl. Now, I've sung that to RAY a dozen times, and he never even said it was nice. He hasn't any soul for music; O, dear, what a creature!

Mrs. V. D. Yes, and what a victim you will be with a husband who has $60,000 per annum income.

Pearl. That's some comfort, isn't it?

Ray. (*Enters* L. H. *bowing to others.*) Going out, PEARL?

Pearl. Yes, we're off to Shrewsbury. Quite a party's going—four carriages—and we mean to stay and ride home by moonlight.

Ray. Couldn't you return a little earlier?

Mrs. V. D. Earlier! Pshaw! What's in you, TRAFFORD. (*The ladies and gents. go up.*)

Ray. (PEARL, C.) You know that LAURA will be quite alone, and she is still suffering.

Pearl. Well, she'll read and read, as she always did, and never miss me.

Ray. But, at least, she ought to have some little attention.

Pearl. Dear, dear, what an unreasonable fellow you are. Isn't she happy now—didn't you save her from drowning, and havn't I been as good to her as I can be—what more do you want?

Ray. I don't like to hear you talk so, PEARL, and remember what she and you were once. And you know that she was something else once—something that you are now to me. And yet how cheerful, how gentle she is. She has lost everything and does not complain.

Pearl. Well, what a sermon! There, I know you're hurt and I'm a fool. But I can't help it. People say she's good-looking, but she's got no heart! I'd give anything for one, but they aint to be bought.

Ray. Well, don't moan about it, I didn't mean to reprove you.

Pearl. But you do reprove me. I'm sure I havn't been the cause of LAURA'S troubles. I didn't tell the big, ugly man to come and take her away, although I was once glad he did.

Ray. PEARL!

Pearl. Because I thought I had gained you by it. (RAY *turns away.*) But now I've got you, I don't seem to make you happy. But I might as well complain that you don't make me happy—but I don't complain, I am satisfied, and I want you to be satisfied. There, *are* you satisfied?

Mrs. V. D. (*Who with others has been promenading up and down the balcony.*) Here are the carriages.

Pearl. I'm coming. Can't you get me my shawl, RAY. (RAY *gets it from chair.*)

Mrs. V. D. And here's your foreign admirer on horseback.

(SUE EARLIE, DEMILT *and* WINDEL, *exit.*)

Pearl. (*Up stage* C.) Bye, bye, RAY. (*Exit.*)

Mrs. V. D. Are you not coming, TRAFFORD?

Ray. I? No!

Mrs. V. D. Do come on horseback, here's a horse ready for you.

Pearl. (*Without.*) RAY! RAY!

Mrs. V. D. PEARL'S calling you. Be quick or Count CAROM will be before you, and hand her in the carriage.

Ray. (*Taking his hat slowly.*) O, by all means, let the Count have some amusement.

Mrs. V. D. (*Taking* RAY'S *arm.*) You're a perfect icicle.

[*They exit.*

[*Noise of whips and laughter. Plaintive music as* LAURA *enters* L. *goes to* C. *and gazes out at them.*]

Laura. Poor PEARL. It is a sad thing to want for happiness but it is a terrible thing to see another groping about blindly for it when it is almost within the grasp. And yet she can be very happy with him. Her sunny temper, and her joyous face will brighten any home. (*Sits at table* C., *on which are books,*) How happy I feel to be alone with these friends, who are ever ready to talk to me—with no longings for what I may not have—my existence hidden from all, save two in the wide world, and making my joy out of the joy of that innocent child who will soon be his wife.

(PEACHBLOSSOM *appears at back looking in cautiously, grotesquely attired.*

Peach. If you please.

Laura. (*Aloud.*) Who is there?

Peach. (*Running in window* F.) O, it's Miss NINA! O, I'm so glad; I've had such a hunt for you. Don't ask me nothing yet. I'm so happy. I've been looking for you so long, and I've had such hard luck. Lord what a tramp—miles on miles.

Laura. Did any one see you come here? How did you find me?

Peach. I asked 'em at the hotel where Mr. TRAFFORD was, and they said at COURTLANDS, and I asked 'em where COURTLANDS was, and they said down the shore, and I walked down lookin' at every place till I came here.

Laura. Speak low, BLOSSOM. My existence is a secret, and no one must hear you.

Peach. Well, Miss, I says to SNORKEY—says I—

Laura. Is he with you?

Peach. No, Miss, but we are great friends. He wants me to keep house for him some day. I said to him—"I want to find out where Miss NINA'S gone," and so he went to Mr. TRAFFORD'S and found he was come to Long Branch, but never a word could we hear of you.

Laura. And the others—those dreadful people?

Peach. BYKE and old JUDAS? Clean gone! They hasn't been seen since they was took up for throwing you into the water, and let off because no one came to Court agin 'em. BERMUDAS says he's seen 'em in BARNUM'S wax-work show, but BERMUDAS is *such* a liar. He brought me up here.

Laura. Brought you up here.

Peach. Yes, he sells papers at STETSON'S; he's got the exclusive trade here, and he has a little wagon and a horse, and goes down to the junction every night to catch the extras from the Express train what don't come here. He says he'll give me lots of nice rides if I'll stay here.

Laura. But you must not stay here. You must go back to New York this evening.

Peach. Back! No, I won't.

Laura. BLOSSOM!

Peach. I won't, I won't, I won't! I'll never let you away again. I did it once and you was took away and dragged about and chucked overboard and almost drowned. I won't be any trouble, indeed I won't. I'll hire out at the hotel, and run over when my work is done at night, when nobody can see me, to look up at your window. Don't send me away. You're the only one as ever was good to me.

Laura. (*Aside.*) It's too dangerous. She certainly would reveal me sooner or later. I must send her back.

Peach. Besides, I've got something to tell you. Dreadful! dreadful! about old JUDAS and BYKE—a secret.

Laura. A secret! what in the world are you saying?

Peach. Is it wicked to listen at doors when people talk?

Laura. It is very wicked.

Peach. Well, I suppose that's why I did it. I used to listen to BYKE and JUDAS when they used to talk about a rich lady whom they called Mrs. COURTLAND.

Laura. Ah!

Peach. JUDAS used to be a nurse at Mrs. COURTLAND'S, and was turned off for stealing. And wasn't she and BYKE going to make money off her! and BYKE was to pretend to be some beautiful lady's father. Then, when they took you, JUDAS says to me: "Did you ever hear of children being changed in their cradles?"—and that you wasn't her child, but she was going to make money off the real one at the proper time.

Laura. What do you tell me?

Peach. Oh! I'm not crazy. I know a heap, don't I? And I want you to think I'm somebody, and not send me away.

Laura. (*To herself.*) She must speak the truth. And yet if I were to repeat her strange words here, I should be suspected of forging some tale to abuse the ear of society. No! better let it rest as it is. She must go—and I must go too.

Peach. You ain't mad with me?

Laura. No, no; but you must go away from here. Go back to the hotel to your friend—anywhere, and wait for me; I will come to you.

Peach. Is it a promise?

Laura. (*Nervously.*) Yes, go.

Peach. Then I'll go; for I know you always keep your word—you ain't angry, cause I came after you? I did it because I loved you—because I wanted to see you put in the right place. Honor bright, you ain't sending me away now? Well, I'll go; good bye!

[*Exit* C.

Laura. (*Animated.*) I must return to the city, no matter what dangers may lurk there. It is dangerous enough to to concealed here, with a hundred Argus-eyed women about me every day, but with this girl, detection would be certain. I must go—secretly if I can—openly if I must.

Ray. (*Outside.*) No, I shall not ride again. Put him up. (*Entering.*) LAURA, I knew I should find you here.

Laura. (*Sitting and pretending composure.*) I thought you had gone with PEARL?

Ray. I did go part of the way, but I left the party a mile down the road?

Laura. You and PEARL had no disagreement?

Ray. No—yes; that is, we always have. Our social barometers always stand at "cloudy" and "overcast."

Laura. (*Rising*) And whose fault is that?

Ray. (*Pettishly.*) Not mine. I know I do all I can—I say all I can—but she— (*Crossing.*)

Laura. But she is to be your wife. RAY—my friend—courtship is the text from which the whole solemn sermon of married life takes its theme. Do not let yours be discontented and unhappy.

Ray. To be my wife; yes. In a moment of foolishness, dazzled by her airs, and teased by her coquettishness, I asked her to be my wife.

Laura. And you repent already?

Ray. (*Taking her hand.*) I lost you, and I was at the mercy of any flirt that chose to give me an inviting look. It was your fault --you know it was! Why did you leave me?

Laura. (*After conflict with her feelings.*) RAY, the greatest happiness I have ever felt, has been the thought that all your affections were forever bestowed upon a virtuous lady, your equal in family, fortune and accomplishments. What a revelation do you make to me now! What is it makes you continually war with your happiness?

Ray. I don't know what it is. I was wrong to accuse you. Forgive me! I have only my own cowardice to blame for my misery But PEARL ———

Laura. You must not accuse her.

Ray. When you were gone, she seemed to have no thought—no wish—but for my happiness. She constantly invited me to her house, and when I tried to avoid her, met me at every turn. Was she altogether blameless?

Laura. Yes, it was her happiness she sought, and she had a right to seek it.

Ray. Oh! men are the veriest fools on earth; a little attention, a little sympathy, and they are caught—caught by a thing without soul or brains, while some noble woman is forsaken and forgotten.

Laura. (RAY *throws himself into a seat.*) RAY, will you hear me?

Ray. (*Looking at her hopefully.*) Yes, speak to me as you used to speak. Be to me as you used to be.

Laura. (*Smiling sadly*) I cannot be that to you; but I can speak as the spirit of the LAURA who is dead to you forever.

Ray. Be it as you will.

Laura. (*Standing beside him.*) Let the woman you look upon be wise or vain, beautiful or homely, rich or poor, she has but one thing she can really give or refuse--her heart! Her beauty, her wit, her accomplishments, she may sell to you—but her love is the treasure without money and without price.

Ray. How well I have learned that.

Laura. She only asks in return, that when you look upon her, your eyes shall speak a mute devotion; that when you address her, your voice shall be gentle, loving and kind. That you shall not despise her because she cannot understand, all at once, your vigorous thoughts and ambitious designs: for when misfortune and evil have defeated your greatest purposes—her love remains to console you. You look to the trees for strength and grandeur—do not despise the flowers, because their fragrance is all they have to give. Remember,—love is all a woman has to give; but it is the only earthly thing which God permits us to carry beyond the grave.

Ray. (*Rising.*) You are right. You are always right. I asked PEARL to be my wife, knowing what she was, and I will be just to her. I will do my duty though it break my heart.

Laura. Spoken like a hero.

Ray. But it is to you I owe the new light that guides me; and I will tell her—

Laura. Tell her nothing—never speak of me. And when you

see her, say to her it is she, and she alone, whom you consult and to whom you listen.

Ray. And you—

Laura. You will see me no more.

Ray. You will leave me?

Laura. Something of me will always be with you—my parting words—my prayers for your happiness. (*Distant music heard.*)

Ray. (*Falling on his knees.*) O, LAURA, you leave me to despair.

Laura. (C.) No; to the happiness which follows duty well performed. Such happiness as I feel in doing mine.

PICTURE.

Scene closes in. During last of this scene the sun has set, and night come on. Stage dark.

SCENE II.—*Woods near Shrewsbury Station.*

(*Enter* BYKE *shabbily dressed*, L. 1 E.)

Byke. It's getting darker and darker, and I'm like to lose my way. Where the devil is JUDAS? It must be nine o'clock, and she was to be at the bend with the wagon half an hour ago. (*Rumble of wheels heard.*) Humph—at last.

Judas. (*Entering* L.) Is that you BYKE?

Byke. Who did you suppose it was? I've been tramping about the wet grass for an hour.

Judas. It was a hard job to get the horse and wagon.

Byke. Give me a match. (*Lights pipe and leans against a tree.*) Did you get the bearings of the crib?

Judas. Yes, it is on the shore, well away from the other cottages and hotels.

Byke. That's good. Nothing like peace and quietness. Who's in the house?

Judas. Only the two girls and the servants.

Byke. How many of them?

Judas. Four.

Byke. It'll be mere child's play to go through that house. Have you spied about the swag?

Judas. They have all their diamonds and jewels there; PEARL wears them constantly; they're the talk of the whole place.

Byke. We'll live in luxury off that girl all our lives. She'll settle a handsome thing on us, won't she? when she knows what we know, and pays us to keep dark;—if t'other one don't spoil the game.

Judas. Curse her! I could cut her throat.

Byke. O, I'll take care of that!

Judas. You always do things for the best, dear old BYKE!

Byke. Of course I do. What time is it?

Judas. Not ten yet.

Byke. An hour to wait.

Judas. But, BYKE, you won't peach on me before my little pet is married, will you?

Byke. What's the fool about now?

Judas. I can't help trembling; nothing is safe while LAURA is there.

Byke. I've provided for that. I've had the same idea as you:—while she's in the way, and TRAFFORD unmarried, our plans are all smoke, and we might as well be sitting on the hob with a keg of powder in the coals.

Judas. That we might. But what have you thought to do?

Byke. Why, I've thought what an unfortunate creature LAURA is,—robbed of her mother, her home, and her lover; nothing to live for; it would be a mercy to put her out of the way.

Judas. That's it; but how—how—how—

Byke. It's plain she wasn't born to be drowned, or the materials are very handy down here. What made you talk about cutting her throat? It was very wrong! When 'a thing gets into my head, it sticks there.

Judas. You oughtn't to mind me.

Byke. Make your mind easy on that score.

Judas. (*Alarmed.*) BYKE, I heard some one in the bushes just there. (*Points off* R.)

Byke. (*Nervously and quickly.*) Who? Where? (*Going* R.)

Judas. Where the hedge is broken. I could swear I saw the shadow of a man.

Byke. Stop here. I'll see. [*Off* R.

Judas. (*Solus.*) I begin to shiver. But it must be done or we starve. Why should I tremble? it's the safest job we ever planned. If they discover us, our secret will save us;—we know too much to be sent to jail.

(*Re-enter* BYKE, *slowly.*)

Byke. Ther are traces, but I can see no one. (*Looking off* R.)

Judas. Suppose we should have been overheard!

Byke. (*Glaring at her.*) Overheard? Bah! no one could understand.

Judas. Come, let us go to the wagon and be off.

Byke. (*Always looking off* R.) Go you, I will follow. Bring it round by the station, and wait for me in the shadows of the trees. I will follow. (JUDAS *goes off* L. BYKE, *after a moment,—still looking* R.,—*buttons up his coat and hides behind wood,* R. H.) Heigho! I must be off.

(*Enter* SNORKEY, *slowly,* R.)

Snorkey. Tracked 'em again! We're the latest fashionable arrivals at Long-Branch. "Mr. BYKE and LADY, and Brigadier-General SNORKEY, of New-York;"—there's and item for the papers! With a horse and wagon, they'll be at the seaside in two hours; but in the train I think I'll beat 'em. Then to find Cap'n TRAFFORD, and give him the wink, and be ready to receive the distinguished visitors with all the honors. Robbery; Burglary; Murder;—that's BYKE'S catechism:—"What's to be done when you're hard up? Steal! What's to be done if you're caught at it? Kill!" It's short and easy, and he lives up to it like a good many Christians don't live up to their laws. (*Looking off* L.) They're out of sight. Phew! it's midsummer, but I'm chilled to the bone; something like a piece of ice has been stuck between my shoulders all day, and something like a black mist is always before me. (BYKE *is behind tree.*) Just like old NETTLY told me he felt, the night before Fredericksburg;—and next day he was past all feeling,—hit with a shell, and knocked into so many pieces, I didn't know which to call my old friend. Well,

(*slapping his chest,*) we've all got to go; and if I can save *them*, I'll have some little capital to start the next world on. The next world perhaps I shan't be the maimed beggar *there* that I am in this. (*Takes out pistol, examines cap; goes off* L., BYKE *gliding after him.*)

SCENE III.—*Railroad Station at Shrewsbury Bend. Up* R. *the Station shed* R. H. *Platform around it, and door at side, window in front. At* L. L. E. *clump of shrubs and tree. The Railroad track runs from* L. 4 E. *to* R. 4 E. *View of Shrewsbury River in perspective. Night. Moonlight. The switch, with a red lantern and Signal man's coat hanging on it* L. C. *The Signal lamp and post beside it.*

As the scene opens, several packages are lying about the Stage, among them a bundle of axes. The Signal man is wheeling in a small barrel from L. *whistling at his work. Enter* LAURA *in walking dress, coming feebly from* L. U. E.

Laura. It is impossible for me to go further. A second time I've fled from home and friends, but now they will never find me. The trains must all have passed, and there are no conveyances till to-morrow. (*She sits at clump* L. U. E.)

Signal. Beg pardon, ma'am, looking for anybody?

Laura. Thank you, no. Are you the man in charge of this station?

Signal. Yes, ma'am.

Laura. When is there another train for New York?

Signal. New York? Not till morning. We've only one more train to-night; that's the down one; it'll be here in about twenty minutes—"Express Train."

Laura. What place is that?

Signal. That? That's the signal station shed. It serves for store-room, depot, baggage-room, and everything.

Laura. Can I stay there to-night?

Signal. There? Well it's an odd place, and I should think you would hardly like it. Why don't you go to the hotel?

Laura. I have my reasons—urgent ones. It is not because I want money. You shall have this (*producing portmonnaie*) if you let me remain here.

Signal. Well, I've locked up a good many things in there over night, but I never had a young lady for freight before. Besides, ma'm, I don't know anything about you. You know it's odd that you won't go to a decent hotel, and plenty of money in your pocket.

Laura. You refuse me—well—I shall only have to sit here all night.

Signal. Here, in the open air? Why, it would kill you.

Laura. So much the better.

Signal. Excuse me for questions, Miss, but you're a running away from some one, ain't you?

Laura. Yes.

Signal. Well, I'd like to help you. I'm a plain man you know, and I'd like to help you, but there's one thing would go agin' me to assist in. (LAURA *interested.*) I'm on to fifty years of age, and I've

many children, some on 'em daughters grown. There's a many temptations for young gals, and sometimes the old man has to put on the brakes a bit, for some young men are wicked enough to persuade the gals to steal out of their father's house in the dead of night, and go to shame and misery. So tell me this—it ain't the old man, and the old man's home you've left, young lady?

Laura. No; you good, honest fellow—no—I have no father.

Signal. Then, by Jerusalem! I'll do for you what I can. Anything but run away from them that have not their interest but yours at heart. Come, you may stay there, but I'll have to lock you in.

Laura. I desire that you should.

Signal. It's for your safety as much as mine. I've got a patent lock on that door that would give a skeleton key the rheumatism to fool with it. You don't mind the baggage. I'll have to put it in with you, hoes, shovels, mowing machines, and what is this—axes. Yes, a bundle of axes. If the Superintendent finds me out, I'll ask him if he was afraid you'd run off with these. (*Laughs.*) So, if you please, I'll first tumble 'em in. (*Puts goods in house,* LAURA *sitting on platform* R. H. *looking at him When all in, he comes towards her, taking up cheese-box to put it in Station.*) I say, Miss, I ain't curious—but, of course, it's a *young man* you're a going to?

Laura. So far from that, it's a young man I'm running away from.

Signal. (*Dropping box.*) Running away from a young man! Let me shake hands with you. (*Shakes her hand.*) Lord, it does my heart good! At your age, too! (*Seriously.*) I wish you'd come and live down in my neighborhood a while, among my gals. (*Shaking his head.*) You'd do a power of good. (*Putting box in station.*)

Laura. I've met an excellent friend. And here at least I can be concealed until to-morrow—then for New York. My heart feels lighter already—it's a good omen.

Signal. Now, Miss, bless your heart, here's your hotel ready.

(*Goes to switch and takes coat off, putting it on.*)

Laura. Thanks, my good friend; but not a word to any one—till to-morrow; not even—not even to your girls.

Signal. Not a word, I promise you. If I told my girls, it would be over the whole village before morning. (*She goes in. He locks door.* LAURA *appears at window facing audience.*)

Laura. Lock me in safely.

Signal. Ah! be sure I will. There! (*Tries door.*) Safe as a jail. (*Pulls out watch, and then looking at track with lantern.*) Ten minutes and down she comes. It's all safe this way, my noisy beauty, and you may come as soon as you like. Good night, Miss!

Laura. (*At window.*) Good night.

Signal. Running away from young man, Ha! ha! ha!

(*He goes to track, then looks down* R.—*lights his pipe and is trudging off* R., *when enter* SNORKEY *from* L. U. E.

Snorkey. Ten minutes before the train comes. I'll wait here for it. (*To Signal man who re-enters.*) Hollo, I say, the train won't stop here too long will it.

Signal. Too long? It won't stop here at all.

Snorkey. I must reach the shore to-night. There'll be murder done, unless I can prevent it!

Signal. Murder, or no murder, the train can't be stopped.

Snorkey. It's a lie. By waving the red signal for danger, the engineer must stop, I tell you!

Signal. Do you think I'm a fool! What! disobey orders and lose my place; then what's to become of my family? (*Exit* R. U. E.

Snorkey. I won't be foiled. I will confiscate some farmer's horse about here, and get there before them somehow. (BYKE *enters at back with loose coil of rope in his hand.*) Then when BYKE arrives in his donkey cart he'll be ready to sit for a picture of surprise. (BYKE *enters* L. U. E. *suddenly throwing the coil over* SNORKEY.)

Byke. Will he?

Snorkey. BYKE!

Byke. Yes, BYKE. Where's that pistol of yours? (*Tightening rope round his arm.*)

Snorkey. In my breast pocket.

Byke. (*Taking it.*) Just what I wanted.

Snorkey. You ain't a going to shoot me?

Byke. No!

Snorkey. Well, I'm obliged to you for that.

Byke. (*Leading him to platform.*) Just sit down a minute, will you.

Snorkey. What for? (LAURA *appears horror struck at window.*)

Byke. You'll see.

Snorkey. Well, I don't mind if I do take a seat. (*Sits down.* BYKE *coils the rope round his legs.*) Hollo! what's this?

Byke. You'll see. (*Picks the helpless* SNORKEY *up.*)

Snorkey. BYKE, what are you going to do!

Byke. Put you to bed. (*Lays him across the R. R. track.*)

Snorkey. BYKE, you don't mean to— My God, you are a villain!

Byke. (*Fastening him to rails.*) I'm going to put you to bed. You won't toss much. In less than ten minutes you'll be sound asleep. There, how do you like it? You'll get down to the Branch before me, will you? You dog me and play the eavesdropper, eh! Now do it if you can. When you hear the thunder under your head and see the lights dancing in your eyes, and feel the iron wheels a foot from your neck, remember BYKE! (*Exit* L. H. E.

Laura. O, Heavens! he will be murdered before my eyes! How can I aid him?

Snorkey. Who's that?

Laura. It is I. Do you not know my voice?

Snorkey. That I do; but I almost thought I was dead, and it was an angel's. Where are you?

Laura. In the station.

Snorkey. I can't see you, but I can hear you. Listen to me, Miss, for I've got only a few minutes to live.

Laura. (*Shaking door.*) God help me? and I cannot aid you.

Snorkey. Never mind me, Miss. I might as well die now, and here, as at any other time. I'm not afraid. I've seen death in almost every shape, and none of them scare me; but, for the sake of those you love, I would live. Do you hear me?

Laura. Yes! yes!

Snorkey. They are on the way to your cottage—BYKE and JUDAS—to rob and murder

Laura. (*In agony.*) O, I must get out! (*Shakes window bars.*) What shall I do?

Snorkey. Can't you burst the door?

Laura. It is locked fast.

Snorkey. Is there nothing in there?—no hammer?—no crowbar?

Laura. Nothing! (*Faint steam whistle heard in the distance.*) O, heavens! The train! (*Paralysed for an instant.*) The axe!!!

Snorkey. Cut the woodwork! Don't mind the lock—cut round it! How my neck tingles! (*A blow at door is heard.*) Courage! (*Another.*) Courage! (*The steam whistle heard again—nearer, and rumble of train on track. Another blow.*) That's a true woman! Courage! (*Noise of locomotive heard—with whistle. A last blow; the door swings open, mutilated—the lock hanging—and* LAURA *appears, axe in hand.*)

Snorkey. Here—quick! (*She runs and unfastens him. The locomotive lights glare on scene.*) Victory! Saved! Hooray! (LAURA *leans exhausted against switch.*) And these are the women who ain't to have a vote!

(*As* LAURA *takes his head from the track, the train of cars rushes past with roar and whistle from* L. *to* R. H.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*An elegant boudoir at* COURTLAND'S *cottage, Long Branch; open window and balcony at back; moonlight exterior; tree overhanging balcony.*

Bed is at U. E. L.; *toilette table* R.; *arm chair* C.; *door* L. 2 E.; *lighted lamp on toilette table; dresses on chair by bed* L. H. *and by window on* R. (*Music.*)

PEARL *is discovered* (*en negligee*) *brushing her hair out at table before mirror.*

Pearl. I don't feel a bit sleepy. What a splendid drive we had! I like that foreigner. What an elegant fellow he is! RAY is nothing to him. I wonder if I'm in love with him. Pshaw! What an idea! I don't believe I could love anybody much. How sweetly he writes!—(*picks up letter and sits on chair* C.) "You were more lovely than ever to-night; with one more thing, you'd be an angel!" Now, that's perfectly splendid: "with one more thing, you'd be an angel—that one thing is love. They tell me Mr. TRAFFORD is your professed admirer. I'm sure he could never be called your lover—for he seems incapable of any passion but Melancholy." It's quite true. RAY does not comprehend me. (*Takes up another letter.*) "PEARL, forgive me if I have been cross and cold. For the future, I will do my duty, as your affianced husband, better." Now, did ever anyone hear such talk as that from a lover? Lover!—O, dear! I begin to feel that he can love, but not me. Well, I'd just as soon break—if he'd be the first to speak. How nice and fresh the air is!—(*she turns down lamp.*) It's much nicer here, than going to bed. (*Settles herself in tete-a-tete for a nap. Pause.*)

[*Moonbeams fall on* BYKE, *who appears above the balcony. He gets over the rail and enters.*

Byke. Safely down! I've made no mistake—no, this is her room. What a figure I am for a lady's chamber. (*Goes to table, picks up delicate lace handkerchief, and wipes his face.*) Phew! Hot! (*Puts handkerchief in his pocket.*) Now for my bearings. (*Taking huge clasp-knife from his pocket.*) There's the bed where she's sleeping like a precious infant, and here— (*Sees* PEARL *in chair and steals round at back, looking down at her.*) It's so dark—I can't recognize the face. It's a wonder she don't feel me in the air and dream of me. If she does she'll wake sure—but it's easy to settle that. (*Takes phial of chloroform from his pocket, saturates the handkerchief he picked up, and applies it.*) So!—now my charmer—we'll have the ear-rings. (*Takes them out.*) What's here (*Going to table.*) Bracelets—diamonds! (*Going to dresses, and feeling in the pockets.*) Money! That's handy. (*He puts all in a bag, and hands them over balcony.*) Now

for the drawers, there's where the treasure must be. Locked? (*Tries them with a touch of keys.*) Patent lock, of course! It amuses me to see people buying patent locks, when there's one key will fit 'em all. (*Produces small crowbar, and just as he is about to force the drawer, a shout is heard, and noise of wagon.*) What's that? (*Jumps, catching at bureau, which falls over.*) Damnation!

Pearl. (*Starting up.*) Who's there? What's that?

Byke. Silence, or I'll kill you!

Pearl. Help! Help!

Byke. (*Running to bureau for knife.*) You will have it my pretty one. (PEARL *runs to door* L.)

Pearl. Save me! Save me! (BYKE *pursues her, the door bursts open and* RAY *and* LAURA *enter.* BYKE *turns and runs to balcony, and confronts* SNORKEY *and* BERMUDAS, *who have clambered over.*)

Laura. Just in time.

Ray. (*Seizing* BYKE.) Scoundrel!

Snorkey. Hold him, Governor! Hold him. (*Assists* RAY *to bind* BYKE *in chair* R. H.)

Ber. Sixty-sixth and last round. The big 'un floored, and BERMUDAS as fresh as a daisy.

Pearl. Dear, dear LAURA, you have saved me.

Ray. Yes, PEARL; from more than you can tell.

Laura. No, no, her saviors are there. (*Pointing to* BER. *and* SNOR.) Had it not been for the one, I should never have learned your danger, and but for the other, we could never have reached you in time.

Snorkey. BERMUDAS and his fourth editions did it. Business enterprise and BERMUDAS' pony express worked the oracle this time.

Ber. The way we galloped! Sa-ay, my pony must have thought the extras was full of lively intelligence

Pearl. Darling LAURA, you shall never leave us again.

Ray. No! never.

Snorkey. Beg pardon, Cap'n, what are we to do with this here game we've brought down?

Ray. The Magistrates will settle with him.

Snorkey Come, old fellow!

Byke. One word, I beg. My conduct, I know, has been highly reprehensible. I have acted injudiciously, and have been the occasion of more or less inconvenience to every one here. But I wish to make amends, and therefore I tender you all in this public manner my sincere apologies. I trust this will be entirely satisfactory.

Ray. Villain!

Byke. I have a word to say to you, sir.

Snorkey. Come, that's enough.

Byke. My good fellow, don't interrupt gentlemen who are conversing together. (*To* RAY.) I address you, sir—you design to commit me to the care of the officers of the law?

Ray. Most certainly.

Byke. And you will do your best towards having me incarcerated in the correctional establishments of this country? (RAY *bows.*)

Snorkey. How very genteel!

Byke. Then I have to say if you will, I shall make a public exposure of certain matters connected with a certain young lady.

Laura. Do not think that will deter us from your punishment I can bear even more than I have—for the sake of justice.

Byke. Excuse me, but I did not even remotely refer to you.

Laura. To whom, then?

Byke. (*Pointing to* PEARL.) To her.

Ray. Miss COURTLAND?

Byke. O, dear! no, sir. The daughter of old JUDAS—the spurious child placed in *your* cradle, Miss LAURA COURTLAND, when you were abducted from it by your nurse.

Pearl. What does he say?

Byke. That you're a beggar's child—we have the proofs! Deliver me to prison, and I produce them.

Ray. Wretch!

Pearl. Then it's you, dear LAURA, have been wronged—while I ———

Laura. You are my sister still—whatever befalls!

Pearl. Oh, I'm so glad it's so! RAY won't want to marry me, now—at least, I hope so; for I know he loves you—he always loved you—and you will be happy together.

Ray. PEARL, what are you saying?

Pearl. Don't interrupt me! I mean every word of it. LAURA, I've been very foolish, I know. I ought to have tried to reunite you—but there is time.

Ray. Dear LAURA! Is there, indeed, still time? (*She gives her hand.*)

Byke. Allow me to suggest that a certain proposition I had the honor to submit has not yet been answered.

Ray. Release him. (SNORKEY *undoes his cords.*)

Byke. Thank you—not so rough! Thank you.

Ray. Now, go—but remember, if you ever return to these parts you shall be tried, not only for this burglary, but for the attempt to kill that poor fellow.

Byke. Thank you. Good-bye. (*To* SNORKEY.) Good-bye, my dear friend; overlook our little dispute, and write to me. (*Aside.*) They haven't caught JUDAS, and she shall make them pay handsomely for her silence, yet.

[*Enter* PEACH, L. 1 E.

Peach. O Miss! O, such an accident—old JUDAS!

Laura and *Byke.* Well?

Peach. She was driving along the road away from here—just now, when her horse dashed close to the cliff and tumbled her down all of a heap. They've picked her up, and they tell me she is stone dead.

Byke. (*Aside.*) Dead! And carried her secret with her! All's up. I'll have to emigrate. (*Aloud.*) My friends, pardon my emotion—this melancholy event has made me a widower. I solicit your sympathies in my bereavement. [*Exit* L.

Ber. Go to Hoboken and climb a tree! I guess I'll follow him and see he don't pick up anything on his way out.

[*Exit* BER. L. E.

Snorkey. Well there goes a pretty monument of grief. Ain't he a cool 'un? If I ever sets up an ice cream saloon, I'll have him for head freezer.

Peach. O, Miss LAURA, mayn't I live with you now, and never leave no more.

Laura. Yes, you shall live with me as long as you please.

Snorkey. That won't be long if I can help it. (PEACH *blushes.*) Beg pardon. I suppose we'd better be going! The ladies must be tired Cap'n at this time of night.

Ray. Yes, it is night! It is night always for me. (*Moving towards door* L.)

Laura. (*Placing one hand on his shoulder, taking his hand.*) But there is a to-morrow. You see it cannot be dark forever.

Pearl. Hope for to-morrow, RAY.

Laura. We shall have cause to bless it, for it will bring the long sought sunlight of our lives.

CURTAIN.

R. SNORKEY. LAURA. RAY. PEARL. PEACHBLOSSOM. L. R

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